THE POETIZATION OF MYSTICAL CONSTRUCTS IN THE WORK OF NOVALIS

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The poet enters into himself in order to create

The contemplative enters into God in order to be created.

Thomas Merton

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To my family, whose love is boundless.

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The poet Friedrich von Hardenberg, assuming the pen name Novalis when he joined the Jena circle in 1798, was venerated among his fellow artists for his keen perception, nostalgic evocative portrayal of moods, and fervent faith in the afterlife. Novalis and a number of influential interpreters (as does popular understanding of mysticism today) fuse the terms romanticism and mysticism to denote the unknown, secret and mysterious. The dissertation examines those constructs found in the romantic period typically given a mystical interpretation, based in part on their ineffability. As the constructs of self, home, and love are examined more closely, however, the difficulty in giving the romantic period a mystical interpretation becomes apparent when such issues as magical idealism, regressive tendencies, and a love of self arise. I suggest that in approaching these constructs in light of the mystical

tradition, it is possible to argue that Novalis emits a mystical hue or flavor without being grounded in the practice.

The romantics and mystics share a common goal of a return to original union, yet the path to wholeness led them down separate roads which, it may be argued, converged only linguistically. Couching my argument in the work of the contemporary philosopher Ken Wilber, who synthesizes western and eastern thought to offer a uniform scale of the levels of consciousness from its evolutionary beginning to the most evolved form of the transcendent levels attained by mystics, it becomes clear that metaphoric language must be examined within its tradition. The inward journey as depicted by the mystic is one which transforms as it evolves through stages of development from everyday consciousness through the spiritual (as heightened sensual sensitivity) through the self to the experience of no self which is pure potential. The romantic envisions this union poetically within the self, setting romantic consciousness at a different level than that of the authentic mystic.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century mystic Karl Rahner declares that in the coming age, we must all become mystics or be nothing at all, while his contemporary Thomas Merton suggests that mysticism is the only cure for the Angst of modern human beings. Strikingly similar contentions emerged from members of the young romantic school of late eighteenth century Germany who denounced the world in a heartfelt effort to romanticize it. By that they meant to liberate the individual self from the confines of reason in order to embrace the emotional childlike spirit destined to see it to its true home. Novalis and a number of influential scholars (as do those who apply mysticism popularly today) fuse the terms romanticism and mysticism to denote primarily the unknown, secret, and mysterious. The romantic view of spiritual growth romanticizes even our understanding of the mystical process today. Though romanticism in the effort to live fully may indeed peripherally characterize mystical elements, the essence of mysticism rests on the perennial belief that the Ultimate Mystery becomes known in transforming union.

The influence of mystical thought evident in the Romantic period, particularly in the writings of the poet Novalis, is well researched and acknowledged.[1] Seldom, however, has emphasis been placed on how Novalis incorporates his understanding of

[1] In selecting Novalis as his pseudonym when he joined the Jena circle in 1798, Friedrich von Hardenberg resurrected a family name dating back to the twelfth century. One can entertain fantastic speculations: is this perhaps supportive of a regressive longing for bygone days? Is he connecting with old roots to marry the old and the new? To what extent is Novalis associated in fact with the word 'new'? Interestingly enough, the pseudonym was only used for his four major works—letters, individual poems, etc. were signed Hardenberg. For convenience, I will predominantly call him Novalis.

mystical constructs into his work and thought. It remains generally accepted that the metaphors which the mystics employed to approximate ineffable experiences are transferred in the constructs themselves, leaving little differentiation for the manifold layers of meaning and intention possible between the mystic and the romantic tradition. Arguably, a mystic's direct experience of the Absolute is as difficult to translate verbally as is the romantic's similarly intense experience of connection with the innermost self. Yet when analogous constructs such as soul, self, or home are set in their respective traditions (mystical vs. romantic), considerable differences emerge which make it problematical that more often than not, a study on German mysticism includes Novalis as the preeminent mystical figure in the Romantic period without acknowledging the various stages of mystical development. I hope that in presenting the mystical constructs found in the work of Novalis, which appear as both strikingly mystical and romantic, reference to the larger framework of established mysticism will illuminate the different intentions of the two schools of thought and thereby present a fairer understanding of certain aspects of their relationship.[2]

Much as Jung believed that the process of individuation, attaining self-realization through self-transformation, could only be effectively completed in the mythic realm of a spiritual tradition (as this gives a context by which to interpret the experience), I believe that misunderstanding, or incomplete understanding, occur when meanings are applied to metaphors from without rather than from within a given tradition. The frequency and permeability of the word mysticism among Novalis and his interpreters even until today first alerted me to the potential for an interesting

[2] I take issue with statements such as the following found in Inge: "The paths are different, but the prospect from the summit is the same" (312) he claims when comparing the likes of Wordsworth, St. John of the Cross, and a Platonic philosopher! As will be shown, the spiritual journey takes many levels of experience into account. I argue that it is precisely because of the different stages of awareness that the prospect from the point of one's personal summit differs, though this may not be apparent in the language used to express the experience.

investigation resulting in the dissertation at hand. Approaching Novalis in light of the mystical tradition presents a perspective that may enrich the work of other Germanists. Mysticism as a term and as depicting the full extent of the spiritual journey has, within the last two decades, returned to its authentic and appropriate understanding only partially compatible with its use in the romantic sense. Afforded today the vocabulary to express the psychology of mystical experiences, increased inter-monastic dialog between eastern and western traditions has deepened the understanding of the mystical journey for all.

The title of the dissertation focuses on the poetization of mystical constructs—words referring to ineffable experiences—by both Novalis and his interpreters. Mystics write aware that their experience of home, for example, can never be fully explained or understood but experientially. Others, such as the romantics grappling with the construct of home or union, may appear to come from mystical understanding but in the end, their use of the construct poeticizes—veils mystical constructs in romantic desire—to offer but an illusion of what few experience as true reality.

I agree with Lukács that Novalis personifies the essence of romanticism: "Novalis ist der einzige wahrhafte Dichter der romantischen Schule, nur in ihm ist die ganze Seele der Romantik Lied geworden und nur in ihm ausschließlich sie" (34).[3] It is on grounds of his "ätherische Glut," his being "ganz Dichter" that Henrik Steffens claims that, although Novalis may have gone above and beyond his time, he is not a mystic in the traditional sense:

> Man kann ihn nicht einen Mystiker im gewöhnlichen Sinne nennen, denn diese suchen hinter der Sinnlichkeit, von welcher sie sich gefangen fühlen, ein tieferes Geheimniß, in welchem ihre Freiheit und geistige Wirklichkeit

[3] Lukács, Georg. "Novalis". Gerhard Shulz, ed, Novalis: Beiträge zu Werk und Persönlichkeit Friedrich von Hardenbergs. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970). 20-35.

> Wirklichkeit verborgen liegt. Ihm war diese geheime Stätte die ursprüngliche klare Heimat; von dieser aus blickte er in die sinnliche Welt und ihre Verhältnisse hinein. (4, 639)

Friedrich Schlegel, in a letter to his brother in Amsterdam, confides that Novalis is unable to sustain a true friendship with him, since his soul has naught but "Eigennutz und Phantasterey" (4, 575). Thomas Mann precisely identifies Novalis as a sensuous thinker and highly intellectual dreamer, characterizations difficult to reconcile with mystical associations, however suggestive they may appear. The following questions arise: to what extent does the romantic understanding of the journey inwards towards union coincide with that of the mystic? How do the differing levels of interpretation of the same construct inhibit the romantic from attaining full union to circle on the level of desire?

The second chapter begins by systematically introducing the history of mysticism as it leads to its current understanding. I suggest that for all practical purposes, it seems that today the term mysticism suffers from being conflated or perhaps con-fused with the term romanticism, an area of concern discussed in the concluding reflections. Especially in the German tradition, mystical elements have additionally fused with dominant philosophical thinking, not to mention an added postwar crisis with language to make the study of German mysticism ever more contingent on the linguistic constructs. At the risk of exaggeration, the influx of fluid and permeable definitions of mysticism allows for anyone who demonstrates 'unconventional thinking' to be diagnosed with possible mystical dispositions. Moreover, the term mystical often erroneously appears as suggestive of mysteriousness, abstractness, or to "suggest mist, and therefore foggy, confused or

vague thinking" (Stace 15). But on the contrary, mystics write with full conviction of a knowledge only one who has shared a direct experience of union with the Ultimate can understand, with never a trace of doubt as to the certainty of what they have experienced. The (erroneous) connotative associations with magical, unknown, and mysterious (to which Novalis subscribes) offers one link to the preponderance of mystical readings of romantic literature.

The chapter additionally includes a brief outline of the mystical journey that the ensuing chapters detail. In short, the levels of consciousness indicate that romantics write from the psychic world, which though it lies beyond the phenomenal world of everyday consciousness and is filled with imaginative legends, visions and poetic inspiration, it has not reached the depth and maturity of the enlightened world of authentic mysticism representative of Meister Eckhart, St. John of the Cross or Zen Buddhism. A brief summary of Ken Wilber's work, which couches my argument, acknowledges the immense contribution of this contemporary thinker. Demonstrating versatile fluency in the languages of philosophy, psychology, literary theory, and the great religions, Ken Wilber has emerged in the last twenty years as a most influential figure to mediate eastern and western thought. Wilber, a western practitioner of Buddhism, endorses a cosmological understanding of universal phenomenon and integrates science and mysticism to build a system of levels (or a spectrum) of consciousness applicable to both the eastern and western mind. Remarkable is that this system is an inclusive evolutionary model, arguing that the evolution of the cosmos parallels an ever evolving evolution of consciousness. Wilber applies the ladder image, the rungs of which he calls fulcrums, to symbolize the steps toward

union, a favorite symbolic representation in mystical literature, and steeped in mythology and lore. Wilber reminds us that in actuality, the path to union is nothing more than an unloading process, as we are already in union. Contrary to the imaginative output of the romantics, the spiritual journey removes the obstacles blocking awareness of this union to then live freely.

The second chapter explores the intense appreciation of nature shared by the mystic and romantic. It is on this initial level of transcendental insight that Novalis shares the greatest affinities with nature mysticism, a most common and rudimentary point of illumination. A primary obstacle to endowing the early German romantic period the nature mysticism honorary is that their metaphoric language is filtered through an ever-present subjective magical idealism, which allows for a mystical hue or flavor without being grounded in a practice.[4] Hence, it is possible for Novalis to reflect the mystical journey without necessarily having traveled it. Given the limits of magical idealism and emotion based subjectivity characterizing Novalis, the poet never undergoes a withstanding transformation past the illuminated spirit of the artist, which though nature mysticism touches the metaphysical realm, it is only the initial awakening. However great of a leap this seems from ordinary consciousness, it is but a natural progression towards ultimate union.

Whereas congruency can be found on the level of nature mystic in Novalis' journey, the longing for home as original paradise begins showing singular romantic ideals. Hymnen an die Nacht serve as poignant examples of the dark night as cover for

[4] I specify German here, but similar contentions are drawn on the English romanticists, the romantic period, and romantic ideas in general.

fantastic embellishments on pronounced spiritual themes. While on the mystical path paradise exists in the fullness of the now, paradise for the romantics loomed as a glorified ideal of the past to be attained in the future. The romantic fascination with childhood and attack on adult reason support the regressive stance which Wilber (citing Habermas's work on evolutionary theories especially in regards to moral development) finds suggestive of the romantics' following of the back to nature cry. Wilber provides a convincing and engaging argument on the regressive momentum of romantic thought as they longed to unify with nature, as did our ancestors of halcyon days. Rather than finding illuminating experiences as invitations to further transformation, the romantic would rather revel on the level of a child's imagination. Infancy was idealized as primordial bliss. In addition to including comments on the Hymnen and significant aspects of Heinrich von Ofterdingen's journey, this rather involved chapter includes an exegesis on the parables of Jesus' teaching to be as children in addition to summarizing the role of the wise teacher for the spiritual journeyer.

To contrast mature and selfless love of the mystics, Novalis' objectified love tethered him to the initial condition of being in love. Granted, the levels of both mystic and romantic love evolve over time, yet the romantic remains on the level of desire to love and be loved while the mystic seeks transformation into love itself. Karl Barth points out that only as longing does the Romantic period exist–as it matured, it withered: "Romanticism is pure as yearning, and only as yearning. That is why Novalis is pure Romantic" (347). Given that the romantic desires what the mystic experiences, Novalis can be seen as mystical only in its elementary stage; as potential,

and only as potential. Forever wrapped up in unrequited desire and under the illusion of freedom by the stretches of his fantastic imagination, Novalis' object of inspiration, desire and ultimate hang-up by his own design was his prematurely deceased bride, Sophie. The construct of love proves a vacuous term until experienced. To enable the mystic to be love, the ego-self must die. Wilber adeptly synthesizes the approaches given with a scientific understanding to portray the human condition as it is, how it got there, and what it must undergo to reach fullness of Spirit. It becomes readily apparent how helpful psychological terms (much more so than theological) have been to narrow the meaning of metaphorical construct of the self. Lastly, mystical growth is both ascending and descending; the perfection of the self unequivocally increases social awareness–to the extent that the other is you not as subject/object dichotomy but as one.

Love in the fullness of maturity reaches out to others in a completely non-attached manner. The stages of consciousness culminate at this highest point of undifferentiated love for all. This highly evolved stage at the level of authentic mysticism is visible in imperfect stages throughout history. Led by romantic thought, Novalis envisioned a universal progression toward what could approach mystical wholeness. Yet the romantics fell short; the youthful enthusiasm of the budding Jena romantics, without ever flowering, withered into the purely demonic, fantastic and grotesque. The romantic reflections concluding the dissertation reiterate the importance of identifying mystical constructs as indicators of permeable levels of consciousness. The emphasis must be kept on romanticism, with all its tenets, and while a small percentage may be seen as mystical, and indeed is, it is only part of the

whole and only mistakenly to be taken as anything greater. As an interesting subplot throughout the dissertation is that romanticism as the beginnings of modernity shadows its influences into today, since general appreciation of mysticism exhibit romantic tendencies. Therefore I view the romantic period as a bridge to popular understanding of spirituality. Moreover, as greater appreciation for spiritual qualities takes hold of modern consciousness, we risk succumbing to Wilber's 'greater span less depth' insight.

The dissertation primarily presents the mystical journey not as something separate that is bestowed on selected initiates, but rather as a natural growth process of every human being. The transpersonal realms are natural progressions from the personal. Attuned to the higher strings within, Novalis and the young romantic school sought altering experiences to enhance their minds. As Wernaer defines romanticism, it "is the return to the ever living eternal spirit itself, the same that God breathed into man's heart in the garden of creation. It is man's return to himself, to one of the well-springs of his life, to the receptive, non-critical, emotional side of his nature" (12). Romanticism at its purest relates innocent and naïve childlikeness; but as long as the individual longs to lift the veil on the other and not one's self, reality has not been manifested.

Unquestionably, the romantics were sensitive to the workings of the spirit who is constantly evolving and leading us home. As the sphinx in the novel observes, we are always on the way home. However, following the romantic path home may not lead us to that of the mystic. By the magical forces of poetry, the romantic testifies to the experience and encourage us to follow in the search for home; the mystic already

awaits us there. The depth of experience must be interpreted, as Jacques Maritain eloquently depicts the relationship "Poetry is spiritual nourishment. But it does not satiate, it only makes man more hungry, and that is its grandeur" (235). Novalis offers what he can, but it is not up to us to interpret more into it as we commence to sit down at the table of longing, which if headed by Novalis, is never cleared.[5]

[5] "Hätten die Nüchternen/ Einmal gekostet,/ Alles verließen sie,/ Und setzten sich zu uns/ An den Tisch der Sehnsucht,/ Der nie leer wird" (Geistliche Lieder 1, 168).

CHAPTER 2
WHAT DO MYSTICISM AND ROMANTICISM HAVE TO DO WITH REALITY?

> We don't see things as they are.
> We see things as we are. Talmud

An ambivalent yet persevering impression of the young romantic school persists today as it did in its inception: some exalt the Jena romantics as a core group of writers who truly understood the human spirit and furthered human evolution in terms of spiritual development at the dawn of modern age, taking us beyond even the ethical ideal of Schiller; others dismiss the sentiment filled fantasizing of the youths as a malignant ulceration in the history of human progress. The roots of praise for one camp amount to grounds for rejection for the other. Seasoned readers agree that the young romantics (Schelling, Tieck, Novalis, Wackenroder, von Baader, Fichte, the Schlegel brothers, Schleiermacher), represent a group of revolutionary intellectuals who hailed in a new era of liberated existence.[1] Their works permeable and fluid in thought and form, the writers defy the rigidity of the preceding Classical era, not to mention the repression of natural instincts for the sake of maturity in the Age of Reason, in its stifling limitations it set upon the human spirit. In Romanticism, Robert Wernaer offers the analogy of classical gardens; controlled green areas contrived of

[1] Pikulik points out that however revolutionary the romantics may be, they and 'romantisches Bewußtsein' come from the historical periods of the Age of Reason and subjectivity. Employing the substance against which they are revolutionizing, the young romantics were not only the product of these perspectives but more importantly saw through this perspective (Pikulik 101).

their 'natural' growth to conform to imposed extrinsic 'ideas' of beauty. As such, concedes Wernaer, did the human spirit suffer. Whereas foliage succumbs to the whims of man, the latter, sooner or later, will rebel. Transitional writers such as Hamann and Rousseau, the latter advocating complete retreat from civilization, had already begun strengthening the fields. The turf, however, was not that already stomped upon by the *Sturm und Drang*, but on unexplored home turf of a new dimensional self.

Their sensitivity threatened to become callused by the tense political, intellectual, and revolutionary atmosphere, the romantics retreated to the sanctioned safety of their inner selves, disclosing a world hitherto unexplored as a literary genre. As did the Romantics themselves believe, many adherents contend that the young romantics emancipated humanity from the scientific and outwardly oriented path humanity was destined to follow. Exonerated from the conforming mental and emotional trimming, repressed aspects of human nature blossomed uncontrollably to their new heights. Welcomed chaos reigned absolutely while feeling took over form and reason. The entire gamut of subjective feelings came to the fore, ready to mask whatever remnants may have been left of classical thinking as a liberated collective force proclaimed with Herder—'I feel, therefore I am.' The philosophy of romantic music shows a similar progression from symphonies adhering to sonata-allegro form towards the abstract evocation of particular moods, such as Tchaikovsky's symphony *Pathetique*. As Romantic music gave way to neoclassical and finally atonality, the lush endeavors of the young Romantics in their extreme emotionalism and unbalanced spirit were destined to always wander in hope without ever experiencing the resolution of returning home.

Reflecting the germane need of romantic thought to extol things—to make reality greater than it is—the romantic poets lend themselves to glorified interpretations. Personally and collectively, consciously and unconsciously, we cherish idealized versions of people and events in our memory. The greater the distance from the event, the more memory is prone to mutations and alterations. Actual experience becomes masked by ideas and idealized. Human nature 'romanticizes' in the very way Novalis used the term. In the vernacular, the term romantic denotes the idealized perfection distanced from what is real, as in "romantische Ferne" (1, 203).[2] Moreover, romantic carries overtones of temporary bliss.

A similar idea exists in our modern consciousness about 'mystic distance.' Anything beyond natural explanation is set off from reality to join the aura-encased word mystical. Glorifying both the romantic and mystic as distant ideals, the terms have fused in modern minds to no longer accurately portray either. Poetry expresses the most romantic essence when pining for something not at hand, most notably love; the agony of longing for a lover's return makes a much more poetically romantic subject than the reunion. As Novalis suggests, everything deserves to be viewed romantically, and nothing is as romantic as the daily events: "Nichts ist romantischer, als was man gewöhnlich Welt und Schicksal nennt" (3, 434), particularly in remembering the past. Sentimentality idealizes nostalgic memories in our minds; the greater the distance, the more *our* interpretation colors the actual situation creating a new myth in the process.

Given the predisposition toward emotional outcries with no reference to reason, romantic theory uncovered the as yet only peripherally explored territory of

[2] Unless otherwise noted, all Novalis citations in the text followed by volume and page number(s) refer to the following edition: Hans-Joachim Mähl and Richard Samuel, eds., Novalis Schriften. 5 vols. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1988). Unless noted, italics appear in the original.

the human spirit. Although already charted by metaphysical philosophers and mystics of the past, the territory beyond ordinary consciousness lured the romantics, who felt connected with postulates and not things. It is in any case something beyond which had formerly been known, and so the term mysticism was quickly employed to embrace the renewed religiosity, sentimental attitude and nature loving spirit characterizing the romantic. Novalis, as the prototype of Romantic thinking and writing, stands therefore as the mystic in Andrew Week's study of German mysticism or as "a dreamy, mystical youth, obsessed with his diseased fiancée" (O'Brian 4). Since the consensus among scholars to render a mystical reading of Novalis and the romantic school remained unquestioned until recently, I quote Wernaer at length to serve as an example:

> Novalis' name will ever be associated with the mystic side of man's spiritual nature. There was a mystic strain in all of our writers, simply because all tended strongly towards religion and metaphysics....Religion is in its essence mystic....Wackenroder was a simple *believer in the world of unseen things*; Tieck's mysticism was acquired: we can hardly say that it was native to his mind. He was changeable, *passing to and fro from romanticism to realism, acting his mysticims more than believing it*....But Novalis was *born* a mystic. He had come from the spirit world; lived on earth to perform his duties as one among men with truly human attachment for this earth; yet looked forward to the time when he could *again return* to what he regarded as his true home...*He was a mystic because poetic, and poetic because mystic.* (emphasis added, 77-79)

As will be established, mysticism has become much more defined since the inscription of these words; this has, however, executed surprisingly little impact on how Novalis is read.[3] How do we decipher Wernaer's use of 'mysticisms' in that these were acted rather than believed? Wernaer voices a typical misunderstanding about mystics suggesting that Novalis was born as such. Much like Novalis believed

[3] Perhaps there are several reasons for this, one of them to be addressed later in the chapter. Germanists seem to perpetuate their own ideas about mysticism based on literary and philosophical support with little communication with studies in mysticism as a practice.

every human could develop into a poet, so are all born with the *capability* of growing towards mystical enlightenment. Being born a mystic, born holy as it were, substantiates the emphasis on the romantic absorption of the return home to paradise as childhood ideal. That Novalis was from the spirit world translates roughly into Friedrich Schlegel's typically romantic assertion voiced in his 1796 Philosophische Fragmente that the mystic is at home in ideas.[4]

The authors Arnold Ruge and Theodor Echtermeyer offer the following support to a common use of mysticism:

> Die Mystik ist der theoretische, der Pietismus der praktische Selbstgenuß des Religiösen. Die Mystik geht nicht auf die Gesinnung und auf das Verhalten nach Außen, sondern auf das Gefühl und die Phantasie, also nach Innen. Die Mystik, dieses visonär exclusive Selbstgefühl im Absoluten, zeigt sich zuerst gegen die steife und äußerliche Scholastik und ist in dem Geltendmachen des Subjectiven die Richtung auf die religiöse Befreiung, ein Vorläufer der Reformation. Der Mystiker in seiner frommen Ekstase ist sein eigener Priester, er hat nur den innerlichen, gar keinen äußerlichen Zweck, er geht über die Formen der Kirche. (14)

This selection emphasizes the importance of the inner life of fantasy and feeling and self's capability of direct communication with God, which most importantly for Ruge and Echtermeyer, allows the mystic freedom from the parameters of the institutionalized Church.[5] In the preface to the Blütenstaub fragments, Samuel identifies Novalis' use of the word mysticism, and every element associated with it, as the secret, claiming therefore that: "Mystizismus als

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[4] Friedrich Schlegel excerpts will be followed by the identifying fragment number from volume 18 of Hans Eicher, ed., Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe (Munich: Ferdinand und Schöningh, 1967).

[5] Interestingly enough, this same idea—that the mystic somehow circumvents religious institution—is a fallacy taken up recently by Don Cupitt. He insinuates that the mystics purposefully chose language to attack orthodox religion. A truer understanding, possible only when recognizing the tradition and not only the language, shows that the language of the mystics points to a perennial dimension of spirituality not counter to but deeper than that commonly associated with established religion.

romantisches Symbol für das Unbegreifbare, Unendliche: das ist der tiefere Sinn, der diesem Worte im Munde der Romantiker und insbesondere Hardenbergs zugrunde liegt" (2, 409). The commentator continues that the goal of life is to search deeply into the secret unknown that lies within. In his famous talks on religion, Friedrich Schleiermacher suggests that ancient eastern mysticism resembles modern Idealism.[6] Other, predominantly secondary works on romanticism associate mysticism with the following: "wollustige Mystik, diese willkürliche Phantastik" (Ruge 17), "ideal, magic, unfamiliar, mystic dreaming" (Wernaer 324), and ironic and ideal as mystical qualities in the work of O'Brian. Others tie in Novalis with mysticism on grounds of his artistic nature: "The artist [is] not only 'elitist' but also 'mystical' (which is also to say 'mysterious,' secret, esoteric)" (Lacoue-Labarthe 69). Friedrich Schlegel presents some of his own ideas of mystics and mysticism as an abyss into which everything sinks in Philsophische Fragmente of 1796: "Bei philsophischem Vermögen—absolutes Wissen—führt der Ekl.[ektizismus] und der [Skeptizismus] zum Mystizism; der *Abgrund* in d[en] alles versinkt." (italics in original 4) and a problematic contention that

> Die *Ismen* sind unheilbar, aber der M[ystiker] E[klektiker] Skeptiker kann geheilt werden <der Mystiker selbst heilbar durch Interesse am Technischen und Historischen>, durch Inconsequenz und dann durch Progreßion ein Philosoph werden. (5)

Schlegel also finds that mystics can arrive at internalized brooding (6) but that mysticism has benefited from its relationship to philosophy unlike by the ancients; "Der My[stizismus] scheint bei d[en] Alten am unvollkommensten geblieben zu sein"

[6] That oriental ideas were readily taken up by the romantics is well established.

(107). The belief that "die Mystik...durchaus nach absoluter Einheit [trachtet] (40) underscores that the emphasis is basically speculative on the how to attain this knowledge through thought.

Some of the following connotations circling the realm of mysticism are still readily in orbit today, adding to the confusion and ambiguity surrounding the term and understanding of the practice. In his book Christian Mysticism, the noted British scholar William Inge includes an appendix which represents the various definitions of mysticism from the early seventeenth century Belgian translator of Greek works Corderius (Balthasar Cordier) through the end of the nineteenth century, notably taken from theologians and evident in romantic thought.[7]

Von Hartmann: "Mysticism is the filling of the consciousness with a content (feeling, thought, desire), by an involuntary emergence of the same out of the unconsious".

Goethe: "Mysticism is the scholastic of the heart, the dialectic of the feelings".

Noack: "Mysticism is formless speculation".

Professor A. Seth: "Mysticism is a phase of thought, or rather, perhaps, of feeling, which from its very nature is hardly susceptible of exact definition."

Récéjac: "Mysticism is the tendency to approach the Absolute morally, and by means of symbols."

> *Nordau*: The word Mysticism describes a state of mind in which the subject imagines that he perceives or divines unknown and inexplicable relations among phenomena, discerns in things hints at mysteries, and regards them as symbols by which a dark power seeks to unveil, or at least to indicate, all sorts of marvels.... It is always connected with strong emotional excitement.

[7] Selections taken from Appendix A 335-348.

R.A.Vaughan: "Mysticism is that form of error which mistakes for a Divine manifestation the operations of a merely human faculty".
"Mysticism is the romance of religion".

Inge himself regrets the unfortunate wording of numerous definitions, especially those of Vaughan (himself author of the well-known book on mysticism Hours with the Mystics). The seemingly inevitable emotional content in relation to a mystical experience in these examples encourages a romantic reading of mysticism, becoming increasingly evident in the discussion on the role of nature for the mystics and the romantics and considering the theosophical bent of German mysticism. The definition of mysticism as specific to German mysticism on the whole (to distinguish from the prominent medieval German mystics in the mystical canon proper) exemplifies Wilber's first level of mystical awareness, that of the psychic. In contrast to the levels of experience posited by Wilber, scholarship tends to create a linear history leveling the differences to conform to a medium. This tendency gives claim to one level of mysticism permeable to include all, whereas a recourse to the levels beyond the elementary psychic one which mature greatly from this point of illumination give a much truer relationship. I will return to this issue in the concluding chapter after having addressed the remaining levels.

Perhaps a great part of the con-fusion reigning today is due to the etymological division of mysticism into the German *Mystik* and *Mystizismus* in the eighteenth century. As Eric Sharpe notes in his essay "Christian mysticism in Theory and Practice: Nathan Söderblom and Sundar Singh", the pejorative term *Mystizismus*

infiltrates the standard term *Mystik*. Late 1700's the terms separated, *Mystizismus* denoting the occult, irrational and emotional while *Mystik* was the line of Meister Eckhart (1260-1327) and religious (predominantly Catholic) tradition. Novalis used both terms interchangeably (perhaps not aware of the difference) and meant neither pejoratively. The examples of Novalis' use already given indicate he had a clear notion of mysticism in his own use of the terms and what he believed to be the one true to his predecessors, namely emphasis on the inner secret.

My considerations echo those of O'Brian, who aims in his book Novalis: Signs of Revolution to put an end to traditional Novalis criticism. Though explicit details of Hardenburg's life have refuted his myth as imprinted in the biographies by Ludwig Tieck and Friedrich Schlegel, recent biographical accounts insist on perpetuating the time-worn legend, which adamantly withstands even the toughest criticism. One of the greatest ironies, O'Brian finds, is that Novalis continues to be deified as a most reverent and pious religious writer, a claim he finds most bemusing as the irreligious thought of Novalis is put to the test.

Most importantly, romantic philosophy found mystical literature abundant with references to the self on its spiritual journey and, especially in the introspective nature mystical insights of seventeenth century Jacob Böhme (1575-1624), a liberating portrayal of relationship to the divine which could be found in nature, beauty and above all art. Mystical literature, especially Böhme, the Theologia Germanica and the writings of the Rhineland mystics, was read through romantically appreciative eyes colored by subjectivity; and for themselves and subsequent readers, a deep committed

fraternity among the mystics and romantics was unquestionably established. Devoted romantics translated and republished mystical works; Franz von Baader, for example, rediscoverd Eckhart for the romantics. Benz devotes his first chapter of The Mystical Sources of Romantic Philosophy (1983) to the mystical texts and ideas as rediscovered by the romantics. Although Benz does not make the distinction, I find it important to remember that the romantics were primarily philosophers re-reading mystical works and thereupon stamping these with their own interpretations. Additional well researched studies on the mystical influences on Novalis include Walter Feilchenfeld's "Der Einfluss Jacob Böhmes auf Novalis" (1922) and Friedrich Hiebel's Novalis (1951), the latter concentrating on the last two years of the poet's life as those being directly tied to the influence of Böhme.

As possible as it is to express truly mystical experiences without ever using or knowing about the word mysticism, as certainly does the use of the word itself reveal possibly little mystical insight. Novalis' use of the term may coincide with his understanding of ineffable constructs to a certain extent—but the underlying belief equates mystical with secretive, the unknown and the distant as in the following oft-cited words:

> Der Sinn für Poesie hat viel mit dem Sinn für Mystizism gemein. Er ist der Sinn für das Eigenthümliche, Personelle, Unbekannte, Geheimißvolle, zu *Offenbarende,* das Nothwendigzufällige. Er stellt das Undarstellbare dar. Er sieht das Unsichtbare, fühlt das Unfühlbare etc. (3, 685)[8]

Novalis' idea of mysticism coincides only partially with the mystic's experience. In the example given above, the emphasis rests on something other than what is the

[8] The senses are discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

reality at hand, a perspective Novalis identifies as mystical. At times, Novalis helps himself to Biblical terminology to differentiate between mystical belief and hope, which interestingly enough, take the form of past and future but not the present: "Mystischer Glaube und die Anhänglichkeit an das, was einmal da ist, das Alte, Bekannte—und die mystische Hoffnung und Freude auf alles, was da kommen soll—das Neue, Unbekannte" (2, 539). Novalis offers an amalgam of contradictory entries, at times bordering on the profane, which include the alliance of mysticism with *Wollust*: "Über die mystischen Glieder des Menschen—an die nur zu denken—schweigend sie zu bewegen—schon Wollust ist (3, 451)[9] to the mystical union of Sophie with Christ. Under the heading of *Politik*, Novalis offers words of mystical insight, though his actual intentions herewith elude me: "Wir sind mit dem Unsichtbaren näher, als mit dem Sichtbaren verbunden. (mystischer Republicaner)" (3, 285). In his encyclopedic collection entitled Das Allgemeine Brouillon, Novalis lists the following as linked with mysticism: "Mystische W[issenschaften]—Menschen—Dinge—Zeichen—Töne—Gedanken—Empfindungen—Zeiten—Figuren—Bewegungen etc. (Mystisch—heilig—abgesondert—*isolirt.*)" (3, 423). Novalis manages not only mysticism but also friendship, love, and piety secretively (2, 423). Such sentiments offer support to emphasize the poetical reading Novalis himself gave mystical constructs, and how the emphasis on romantic prevails. Furthermore, it is most important to keep in mind that for Novalis, poetry can at all times be substituted for mysticism and the poet for the mystic. Vice versa works as well, for both the poet

[9] Along those lines: "Amor ist es, der uns zusammengedrückt. In allen obgedachten Functionen liegt Wollust (Sym[pathie]) zum Grunde. Die eigentlich wollüstige Funktion ist die am Meisten Mystische" (3, 425). Compare also: "Diese mystische Kraft scheint die Kraft der Lust und Unlust zu seyn—deren *begeisternde* Wirkungen wir so ausgezeichhnet in den *wollüstigen* Empfindungen zu bemercken glauben" (3, 423). Sexual desire is regarded as an intimate mystical longing for Novalis in the search for finding his fulfilled self. This could be reconciled with the mystical appreciation of sexual energy as mediating factor for enlightenment, especially in practices such as Tantra, but with Novalis there is no indication for anything but equating love, desire, and God as one in sexual desire.

and the mystic (which romantic consciousness amalgamates) meander beyond the conventional rational boundaries in search of the unknown. For the romantic Novalis, the poet, as frontiering spirit in search of the inner self, is the epitome of the mystic. And this being given, we can gather a rather accurate representation of where Novalis and his theory fits in with established mysticism.

Mysticism

Since mysticism as a term, and more so as a study, endures multifarious interpretations, I will begin by briefly presenting important contributions to the study of mysticism and thereby hopefully clarify my own understanding of the term and practice. I find it useful to relate German mysticism to the larger Christian tradition, as there is a set understanding of German mysticism and theosophy not adopted by Christian mysticism in general. The unstable history within medieval Catholicism, the Protestant vent enlarging the meaning of mysticism to stray into more philosophical and nature-oriented definitions and the singular placement of the terms *Mystik* and *Mystizismus* in the Germanic tradition renders it not surprisingly that mysticism as a whole suffered misapprehension. A review of the cyclical nature of mysticism reveals that extended periods of 'mystical dark ages' are interspersed with a flowering of great mystics. Mirroring political and other histories, the chronicle of religion, so often intertwined with history in general, was shaped by reactive forces. At the advent of the modern age of technology, it is not surprising to find yet another period of diminished interest in the mystics as science and industry coupled with the exploration

of capabilities of reason reached new heights. This setting provided fertile ground for a small yet resolute group of artists and intellectuals to tap into this consciousness which they intuitively felt was the truth, made even more enticing having been denounced by authorities.

Tracing its roots back to the 'mysterian' of the Hellenistic age in which initiated members swore to secrecy, the etymological origin of the term mysticism contributes to its widespread use to designate something dark and mysterious. Novalis shows his indebtedness to his idealized Greek forerunners perpetuating this aspect of secrecy in mysticism: "Was ist *Mystizismus*—was muß *mystisch* (Geheimnißvoll) behandelt werden?" (3, 420). The hidden meaning and rituals were one to which others must 'close the eyes' (*myo)*, a meaning which Egan, in the Anthology of Christian Mysticism, suggests was taken over by neo-platonic philosophers to include then the closing of exterior eyes to the world to focus on the interior spiritual life. The element of secrecy was later transferred onto the exegetic realm to suggest the latent and deepest meaning of the Gospels hidden to the uninitiated eye unable to see beyond the printed metaphors.[10] Through Dionysius (sixth century), the term mysticism came into the Christian vocabulary to denote a preference to experience God by way of 'unknowing.' Toward the end of the Middle Ages, the term took on the more subjective and individualized meaning it carries today, due in part to monastic setting which fostered spiritual development through work and prayer. It was only in the last century that the extraordinary acceptance of grace granted to individuals was brought

[10] Such as postulated by Origen (185-254), associated with the Greek Fathers and Alexandrian Christians.

to importance in the Christian tradition as a point of different intention from the eastern mysticism that emphasizes personal effort. The gift of grace remains a singular and outstanding component to the Christian tradition. Hildegard von Bingen's confessor, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090/1-1153) writes in a beautiful treatise On Loving God that of the many levels of love obtainable by human effort, it is the fourth degree of love, or true union, which lies solely in God's power to give.

Traditionally rejected as incompatible with ecclesiastical teaching, mysticism has long been viewed with skepticism. Since followers of mystic beliefs were held punishable on account of infecting Christianity with heretical teachings, they were in most cases delivered an anathema. Affinity for mysticism was hence covered under a guise of a non-traditional sect or denomination, such as the Anabaptists in the late Middle ages. Since institutionalized religion focused on the historical Jesus, moral venues, and Catholic dogma, spiritual seekers of a deeper dimension became needless apostates. Most 'proper' Christians were either never introduced to mystical currents or given to understand mysticism was the devil at work. Religion associated with patriarchal hierarchies and guidelines for living stifles the intuitive genius at the center of religion and of the person. Concerned more with the center, the perennial essence of Christianity, mystics fully live the genuine spiritual life from the center. As a modern derivative of what the early Church writers referred to as mystical theology, the actual term mysticism acknowledges the term theology, and as such shows mysticism does not run parallel to theology but is the integral and deepest level of faith component of Christianity. Only the latter part of the twentieth century has begun to recognize the

mystical as an essential component of Christianity though it is far from being readily accepted or understood.

From Zen Buddhism to Jewish Kabalistic mysticism to Islamic Sufism, the mystical traditions provide sketches of the mystical path those seeking the higher dimension. Overwhelmingly, books on mysticism devote the first few pages to a review of definitions confounding the subject area (especially what it is not) in the hopes of shedding some clarity on a term which while gaining recognition in today's world, subsequently seems to be losing its defining core. The tight definition of the mystic—one having attained transforming union—encompasses many aspects of a loose definition that would overlap with the psychological descriptions of heightened states of awareness or consciousness.

Each of the traditions seeks, primarily, to edify searchers to realize that any boundaries we set, that we feel we have to overcome, are in our mind. Mystical practices illuminate paths designed to liberate us from this socially constructed and self-induced illusion. Wandering the universally marked path deepens our relationship with the Absolute in hopes, in the alchemical analogy presented by Herbert Silberer in Hidden Symbolism of Alchemy and the Occult Arts,[11] not only to make things gold (i.e., doing good works) but, more importantly, to become gold through and through (287-8).

As gifted teacher and leader of the contemplative movement today, Thomas Keating (1993) offers a straightforward and practical portrayal to evanesce any florid

[11] The original 1917 title of this study was Problems of Mysticism and Its Symbolism.

veneer we may still retain with regard to what union with the ultimate reality might entail:

> Divine union is not the achievement of some perfection of our own or an escape from our external problems, but is the *radical change of attitude* that enables us to deal effectively with our weaknesses and our problems—the humble acceptance of our lives just as they are, including the monumental moral corruption we may find in ourselves. (emphasis added, 60-61)

Keating adduces that the radical change of attitude is one brought about by the workings of the Holy Spirit and is beyond something we can control, as we can only be open and consent to the practice as the spirit moves within. The passage debunks the typical association of mysticism with experience. For most, the mystical experience is what is of interest and the locus of study from Zaehner's work with drug-induced mystical experience to the comparison of traditions which feeds into popular understanding. Keating stresses that the mystical experience opens our finite beings to infinite possibilities, and it is in the graced ability to then live wholly in our sinful beings that we harbor a mystical attitude.

Paradoxically, the secret of the mystic is something known. Yet it remains secret to the ordinary way of knowing and therefore for all others a mystery to be penetrated. The idea of passivity, and terms such as *via negativa* plague the mystical tradition since passive takes on culturally defined understanding. The pervasive use of negative terminology in the language of the mystics (pervasive but by no means exclusive) and the fundamental role of silence as the ultimate mystical language; silence (the detachment of our inner dialogs—thoughts, emotions and memories),

ultimately, to allow for the fullness of expression of a higher being. Passivity as a receptive stance allows the spirit to work in and through you.

Passivity and the role of silence so often correlated with the introverted mystical experience appear passive to the outsider, yet the mystic rather consents to God's will (Your will be done, not mine) with active receptivity. The most commonly used and inclusive mystical types, since this term has been broached, are introvertive and extravertive.[12] Mystics engaging in emotional, passionate and otherwise outwardly expressed sentiments, notable in women mystics, are identified as extravert and seen as opposite the reserved, perhaps more profound and intellectual introverted types, such as St. John of the Cross (1542-91) and Meister Eckhart.[13] Seen more on a continuum scale, correlating mystical terms are kataphatic and apophatic. Unlike the presentation of extravert versus introvert, these terms lead into the next; the image-filled, visionary and emotive kataphatic stage as penultimate to the voided language of the apophatic tradition. Illustrious language qualifies the kataphatic, negative language and the emphasis on silence the deeper level of realization at the apophatic.

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[12] These terms usually attributed to Stace, who may indeed have been the first to use them in scholarly apparatus.

[13] In his essay "Mysticism, Consructivism, and Forgetting" (in The Problem of Pure Consciousness Robert Forman, ed.) Forman bolsters his definition of mysticism "[m] describes a set of experiences or more precisely, conscious events, which are not described in terms of sensory experience or mental images" (a definition he credits to Ninian Smart) by including a telling chart laid out by Roland Fisher. This cartography is of semicircular form which has on the one end, under the heading of ergotropic states, the pronounced visionary, ecstatic (extroverted) type which appear in states of high cognitive and physiological arousal. The other side— trophotropic— he includes the eastern meditative states of *zazen* and at the tip, *samadhi*. As Forman and Fisher state, these are in contrast, states of low arousal and activity. As would be expected, encephalograms show that brain waves in meditative states differ from those in active states, but they are also different from those during sleep, under hypnosis or induced by drugs. During sleep, the mind may be quiet, but it is not receiving the benefits of true meditation.

Metaphorically, passivity must be understood symbolically, or something more than non-action on which grounds Quietism led to a heresy. Quietism, and the name associated with it in European tradition, Jeanne Marie Guyon (1648-1717), began under the leadership of Molinos who taught his followers to avoid outward-centered activity to strengthen focus on inner quiet. After Molinos was excommunicated on terms of heresy, Guyon continued his efforts (without publicly identifying them as such for fear of her dismissal as well).[14] Her Short Method on Prayer (1685) advises that contemplative prayer, which is the quiet prayer of the heart, leads to spiritual perfection. Spiritual life is a process of stages that increase detachment and surrendering to the divine. In his anthology, Dupré notes that Guyon is one of the most difficult people to place in the mystical tradition, as her work is inconsistent and emotionally charged. Quietism has been regarded negatively as Guyon's followers took her teachings to an extreme, such as ignoring rituals and prayers to allow for them to sit idly. Tauler addresses the misunderstanding on which Quietist practice was based—the misunderstanding of the metaphor of quietness:

> These people have come to a dead end. They put their trust in this natural intelligence and they are thoroughly proud of themselves for doing so. They know nothing of the depths and riches of the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ.... They rely exclusively on the light of their reason and their bogus spiritual passivity. (233)

Traces of a misinterpretation of the 'orison of quiet' were already detected in the Middle Ages, a resting in false idleness which was severely attacked by the Flemish mystic Jan van Ruusbroeck. As the Church seldomly offered guidance, sects and

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[14] The novel Anton Reiser begins with references to Madam Guyon.

heresy flourished among searching people. The communal Brethern of the Free Spirit asserted the pantheistic belief that all substances were of God, and therefore were not distinguishable from God. Quiet prayer and religious practice otherwise dismissed by traditional obligations to the Church became the sole merit of the quietist practice as they sat in wait. Followers felt no responsibility for doing services for others—a passive stance not approved by the mystical tradition as mystics accept their 'secret' knowledge and humbly attempt to express it to benefit humanity.

Since the term God is a loaded concept, Meister Eckhart favored the term Godhead to enable people to get beyond the image of God and to the experience of him. Throughout Eckart's numerous sermons, pearls of apophatic wisdom are scattered about: that one cannot speak about God, that God is not good, or in his Fragments: "Wenn das notwendig sein muß, daß ich von Gott rede, so sage ich, daß Gottes etwas ist, was kein Sinn begreifen oder erlangen kann: sonst weiß ich nichts von ihm...Alles was man von Gott denken kann, das ist Gott ganz und gar nicht" (15). Eckhart longs to rid people of the concept of God and thereby eventually train the psyche to welcome mystical experience by de-*sens*itizing the mind. Similarly, the noted scholars of comparative religion Huston Smith, Joseph Campbell, and Mircea Eliade bemoan that priests and prophets have traditionally been caught up in a conceptual definition of God, rather then lending claim to the mystics who have experienced the Godhead. As Eckhart realizes, everything one thinks of God is definitely what God is not, as the mystic call is to get beyond the thinking of things to

the experience, which only then can transpire fully. The romantics felt drawn to this anti-intellectual attitude and to the calling for experiences.

The ineffable is either represented in the negative, or alluded to without trying to represent, as does Johannes Tauler (c.1300-61) when he offers the enticing invitation to join in his experience: "What the soul encounters there soars above all the senses. Reason may not touch it, no one may grasp or understand it, it is a true foretaste of eternal life" (60). Or in the version of Meister Eckhart: "Gott ist ein so beschaffenens Wesen, daß man es am besten mit Nichts erkennt. Wieso mit Nichts? Dadurch, daß man alles Mittel abtut, aber nicht etwa bloß der Welt entsagen und Tugend haben, sondern ich muß auch die Tugend lassen, wenn ich Gott unmittelbar sehen will"(71). Similarly, God is apophatically beyond everything we know for Dionysius:

> O Trinity/beyond essence and/ beyond divinity and/ beyond goodness/ guide of Christians in divine wisdom, / direct us towards mysticism's heights/beyond unknowing/ beyond light/ beyond limit/ There where the / unmixed and / unfettered and /unchangeable/ mysteries of theology/ in the dazzling dark of the welcoming silence/ lie hidden, in the intensity of their darkness/ all brilliance outshining,/ our intellects blinded- overwhelming, / with the intangible, and/ with the invisible and/ with the illimitable. / Such is my prayer.[15]

Understandably, the direct words of the mystic can be downright offensive to the reason oriented mind gated by formal logic. But it is also true that mysticism continues to hold a great allure to intellectual probation, as the growing philosophical interest supports. Admittedly, William Inge overplays the incompatibility issue slightly by rephrasing Coleridge's argument that one is either Aristotelian or Platonist to state that

one is either naturally mystic or a legalist (Christian Mysticism 36). The difficulties assessing the depths of the ocean while remaining in the boat become evident.

Academic scrutiny of mystical truth must be taken with reservation; alas, because this is typically how the scholar approaches mysticism. One trope of mystical experience—that it be beyond language—finds absolutely no recourse in the recent work such as Cupitt's Mysticism after Modernity (1998) who offers the post-modern rebuttal: since modernity insists that no experience exists apart from language, the mystical experience—in its claim it is above language—is not real. A balanced intellectual approach to the study of mysticism respects the mystery it is, whereas an academic extreme such as Cupitt's failed attempt to modernize mysticism offers ineffectual material.

For the sake of simplicity in this general overview, the academic study of mysticism separates into two main camps, the essentialists and the empiricists, to each explore different theories of mysticism in the attempt to prove the other inadequate. Essentialist theories focus on the sameness or universality of the mystical experience. As the major proponent in the line of Aldous Huxley and Perennial Philosophy (Leibniz), Huston Smith contends that the "perennialist arrives at the ubiquity of his/her outlook more deductively than inductively" (560), meaning that if one statement is true in any condition, then it is true in that very condition universally.[16]

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[15] The poem "Divine Darkness" from Dionysius' The Mystical Theology. Cited in Dupré, Louis and James Wiseman. Light from Light. (New York: Paulist Press, 1988).

[16] See also Chapter 3 "Perennial Philosophy, Primordial Tradition" in Huston Smith, Beyond the Post-Modern Mind (New York: Crossroads, 1982).

The belief in a perennial experience of development of the higher self comes from all cultures and ages and Wilber admits that it is either the greatest error ever made or the single most accurate reality. The perennialists see that an experience of no-self is an experience of no-self in whatever metaphorical form it pleases to express itself.[17] In other words, a variety of parallel paths converge at the point of Ultimate truth. Smith believes that empiricists, or constructivists such as Stephan Katz, who argue that there are no unmediated experiences, do not deeply enough address the subject of non-duality and the "forth mode of knowing that rises above sensations, images, and concepts, all three" (556).[18] Moreover, it is readily accepted that the lower forms of mystical union show greater diversity and are more easily identifiable as belonging to a certain culture.

Empiricist camps, though, much more philosophical, concentrate on the language itself, the historical context, the individual's culture and look for particulars of the experience (Carmody 6). Katz, in his essay "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism" finds that the perennial philosophers' beliefs that all experiences, over centuries and crossing cultural boundaries, are the same too simplistic, false and unsophisticated.[19] Indeed, Katz attempts to disprove the notion of a perennial

[17] Profane mystical states, such as those drug induced, are not recognized as pure mystical states.

[18]The fourth and deepest level is seen more in terms of 'unknowing' or beyond conventional knowing, in other words, beyond language itself, our common measure of that which we know. Constructivists, including on an even further level doubters such as Cupitt, attempt to redefine the words of the psychologist William James. James offers the standard philosophical investigation of mysticism in his popular classic exegesis, The Varieties of Religious Experience and finds four common characteristics, or four marks, of a mystical experience: (1) ineffability, (2) noetic quality, (3) transiency, and (4) passivity. Under noetic quality, James places the condition that the experience gives the person a peculiar sense of authority and that the insight eludes discursive intellect, thereby making it ineffable. The experience itself, though seemingly timeless, is of transient character and of passive nature.

philosophy, the longstanding tradition that, as Huxley identifies in his introduction to The Perennial Philosophy

> was coined by Leibniz, but the thing—the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being—the thing is immemorial and universal. (vii)

Denying completely that there are pure (i.e., unmediated) experiences, Katz seeks to prove that "all experience is processed through, organized by, and makes itself available to us in extremely complex epistemological ways" ("Language" 26) and further that "the mystic brings to his experience a world of concepts, images, symbols, and values which shape as well as color the experience he eventually and actually has" (46). Furthermore, the religious tradition, Katz argues, prepares the type of mystical experience and all experience is therefore processed. The true mystic reaches a livelihood in the undifferentiated presence of the mystery.

In either case, language taken out of context can be manipulated to fit the cause. Katz finds that those (and here he mentions Underhill, Stace, Otto, and Zaehner) looking for similarities will find them—even when they follow a procedure by which they "are misled by the surface grammar of the mystical reports they study... similar-sounding descriptions are not similar descriptions and do *not* indicate the same experience" ("Language" 46-7). Yet again, can one prove, on the experiential level, that they are not the same? The elaborate, perhaps even elusive manner of coming to terms with the mystical experience, captures a fascinating debate and shows the

[19] In Katz, Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis, 22-74.

complexity of the study (dare I say versus the practice) of mysticism. I find these discussions of particular interest in light of the flourishing dialogue between eastern and western monastics convinced of the compatibility of their respective practices.[20]

In his book Literature of Mysticism in Western Tradition, Patrick Grant maintains that "since the nineteenth century, growing sophistication in comparative studies of religion would seem, indeed, to encourage the perennial philosophers" (5). Robert Forman, on the other hand, sees the study of mysticism dominated most forcefully by constructivists during the 1970s and 1980s as a forced response to the perennialists (Mysticism, Mind, Consciousness 31-7). Robert Forman, Stephan Katz and others agree, that the only model academically validated today comes from the constructivist viewpoint. Though academic debates, heralded particularly by Forman, Katz and Smith, enliven the issue, the overall consensus today—if we include the vote of monastic practioners themselves—lies with the firm conviction of the uniformity of the mystical experience uniting orthodox religions at the level of contemplative silence as root of the journey of the soul towards wholeness, in whichever way this route is thematically presented.

To offer a singular proposition as to why current Novalis literature on the whole upholds the poet's mystical ranking (though exemplary exceptions have been noted), a closer look at the study of German mysticism may reveal some indications. The study of German mysticism by Germanists (both in Germany and America),

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[20] Some such meetings take place at the Gethsemani monastery in Kentucky. A selection of publications devoted to the practice of spiritual traditions include East/West Diologue, Intermonastic Dialogue, Thomas Merton Society and annual conventions featuring the Dalai Lama.

however, reveals that German mysticism as a study is, on many levels not compatible with the study of mysticism in general (Christian mysticism). While it is not surprising that Germanists and theologians would offer differing perspectives than religious scholars devoted to mysticism, this difference has not, to any great degree, been admitted as a possible breeding ground for fruitful discussion. In the spirit of solidarity, Germanists continue to perpetuate what has been deemed as true within their own field as literary and philosophical approach. Scholars of German mysticism in the German field, familiar names such as Wentzlaff-Eggebert, Andrew Weeks, Gerhard Wehr and others, continue to present a long line of mystics who "correspond with the great periods of artistic, material, and intellectual civilization" (Underhill, Mysticism 453). Not surprisingly, considering the proportionately large representation of German mystics in the canon, the study of German mysticism has found for itself a subheading in the study of mysticism.

German mysticism has taken on an even more general denotation in the twentieth century, becoming increasingly philosophically based to admit recent authors and philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Rilke, and Musil to the canon of German mystics to date. However, when the emphasis proceeds from particular German mystics to the perception of mysticism, irreconcilable singularities become manifest which while defining German break apart from general contention of mysticism. Bernard McGinn, author of a multi-volume edition of the history of Christian mysticism, includes that *die deutsche Mystik* is the unique mysticism found in Germanic lands from 1250-1470. This would include the three big German names

Meister Eckhart (1260-1327), Heinrich Seuse (1295-1366), and Johannes Tauler (c.1300-61); women such as Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) and Mechthild von Magdeburg (c.1210-97); and the Flemish Jan von Ruusbroec (1293-1381). Even without specifying in the German language, German mystics and German mysticism for the greater arena of Christian mysticism specifies the medieval mystics.

German mysticism focuses on three prominent groups from the eleventh to the twentieth century. Meister Eckhart and his followers Johannes Tauler and Seuse of the twelfth century represent the speculative or philosophical mystics (whom Weeks refers to as reflective while others call them Rhineland mystics). The second group are the woman mystics, predominantly Hildegard von Bingen, Mechthild von Margdeburg and the Beguine culture of the Middle Ages, to then shift to the most recent group of Protestant mysticism including Jacob Böhme and Johannes Scheffler (Angelus Silesius 1624-77). Subtexts in German mysticism, as in Christian, recognize the Spiritualists and lay movements such as the Beguines.[21]

Often set into separate category based solely on their gender, women mystics almost without exception demonstrate a highly extraverted form of mysticism. Women mystics are grouped together because of their unlearned state, which gave them access only to the vernacular voice, often sensual and honest, to their experiences. Women mystics of the middle ages were often condemned as heretics on grounds that, as women, they would dare challenge the authority of the Church. The life of Hildegard provides the well-known example when she, as abbess, disobeyed papal orders and

[21] The first Beguines were a group of lay self-sufficient women.

allowed an excommunicated man's burial on monastery grounds. She bore her retribution without guilt, following God's voice and not man's.

McGinn, in the third volume of his work in progress on Christian mysticism, finds that St. Francis belongs to the era of new mysticism (1200!) in which visions, poeticized love of nature, and the emergence of female mystics dominated. The new mysticism departed from early medieval mysticism to a great part because the mystics themselves were more equally found partaking of life outside of the cloistered walls. McGinn points out that monasteries, being largely self-sustaining, provided no grounds for members of the community to leave from within the walls, and the monastic life over the years was their real world. Exceptions such as Hildegard of Bingen and her confessor Bernard of Clairvaux, each of whom balanced a social agenda with an inherently contemplative demeanor, maintained a viable role outside monastery walls only because, as they claim, God gave them the strength to do so. This outgrowth into the civic world also shadowed changes in mystic language and expression, evident with the increasing poetic descriptions of visions and the resurgence of poetry as mystical form, new to the predominant treatises, sermons and letters, and very importantly, the language of choice no longer limited to Latin, increasing use of the vernacular. The mysticism moved from speculative to the German *Erlebnismystik* or, as familiar to us in English, experiential mysticism.

Women mystics, humbly professing their being but vessels of God with no personal voice, mirror the expectations of the cultural setting. To contrast the intellectual sophisticated and learned presentation of the Dominican monks, women

rejoiced in ecstatic song, visions and voices to develop a distinctly extroverted form of mysticism. To accentuate the female humility runs counter to the emerging assertive role model of the woman today, yet humility, while it is often mentioned in connection with the passive role of women, is clearly a common mystical trait; mystics saw themselves as servants to God and humanity. Seuse entitled his autobiography The Life of a Servant (of good, gentle wisdom), Hildegard received visions from the light: *das Licht, Gott, sprach zu mir*; and Ruusbroec's treatises were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Extraverted mysticism, clearly demonstrated by the medieval German women mystics, augments the emotional component of the writings and contrasts with the introverted style of the Dominicans.

Robert Forman firmly believes that the term mystical may not be used to define sensory language, a belief he finds to be in accord with the Dionysian meaning of 'to close' [the senses] (The Problem 7). This view is problematical in that it rejects numerous canonical passages from mystic writing, most notably perhaps the biblical Song of Songs, not only from the Christian tradition but also such mystical poets as the Sufist Rumi. Here again, it is primarily poetical expression, in its lyric attributes, which lures the reader to other realms of consciousness, though not necessarily mystical realms.

To turn to two more particular and controversial figures, Martin Luther and Jacob Böhme deserve to be recognized as questionable entries in the mystical canon. Martin Luther maintains a tenured position as German mystic for Germanists, but remains a much-speculated member of the larger mystical canon, if accounted for at

all.[22] In an article included in the recently published collection Europäische Mystik, Reichert systematically supports Luther's licit alliance by listing the numerous works of mystics Luther had read, not the least of which was the Tacitus Germanica which presumably he then published. Luther was much indebted to the writing of Johannes Tauler, but as Ursula King substantiates in her compendium of Christian mystics, "this referred mainly to Tauler's spiritual advice on practical matters, whereas Luther mistrusted his essentially mystical teaching" (109). Luther stands as a good example of the whole of German mysticism; as perpetuator of mystical ideas and hence illuminator of mystical thoughts. I would additionally surmise that outfitting Luther with a mystical badge allows many of his followers in turn the same honor.

In the German tradition, Böhme designates a shift to the extraverted teachings of the love and divinization of nature to a global level.[23] Like Luther, Böhme remains a central figure in German mysticism, second only to Meister Eckhart, partly given the enormous influence he exuded on future generations within Germany and beyond, as in the case of the English mystic William Law (1686-1761) and William Blake (1757-1827). Böhme's influence strengthens the argument why the late 1770's to early 1800's carried such mystical overtones in its fascination for philosophical Idealism. Seen in light of the mystical vein, many writers and thinkers who contributed to this thought, such as the ones mentioned above (Baader, Weigel, Schopenhauer) are

[22]Luther is not commonly found in a discussion of core mystics in such standard anthologies as those previously mentioned.

[23] Inge finds that Böhme "mark[ed] the transition from purely subjective type of Mysticism to Symbolism" (278). Again, this is only one additional example of confusing terminology, or it substantiates the need for common labels, if they need be applied.

therefore seen as mystical given their being influenced by mystics and in turn their own contribution to later thought. Many included as mystics are those who immersed themselves in the study of mysticism and assumed mystical ideas and language but give no indication of embracing the mystical path. While these individuals may not have been mystics, it nevertheless stands they themselves tapped into mystical currents moving it along.[24]

In German Mysticism from Hildegard of Bingen to Ludwig Wittgenstein (1993) Andrew Weeks penned one of the most comprehensive books on German mysticism to date. Clearly from an historical angle, and as he qualifies in his opening sentences, takes the common approach to be not so much interested in the "survey of Christian spirituality or mystical experience" (ix) but rather in finding mystical themes pervasive in German literature. Weeks concedes, however, that boundaries are crossed freely when examining the influences of medieval mystics with what he terms the 'secular poetry and philosophy" (217) of mystical themes on the Romantics. Nevertheless, the associations are drawn with but little respect to the mystical tradition.

One further observation pending substantiation is that for general purposes, German study appropriates the constructivist camp. In the preface to Rationalität und Mystik, Hans-Dieter Zimmermann defines the mystic as one who searches for an experience of God: "Der Mystiker sucht die Begegnung mit Gott. Sein Bild von Gott

[24] As another point of interest, Germanic names such as Max Picard, Dag Hammarskjöld, or Hans Urs von Balthasar find mention in non-German sources but are typically omitted from traditional German accounts.

wird von der Vorstellungswelt der Gesellschaft, in der er lebt, geprägt" (14). Such statements speak as overtly constructivist, although Zimmermann's choice of words that the mystic 'searches' for union rather than having experienced it leaves a liberal wideness for inclusiveness. More recently, a sentence such as the following by Andrew Weeks, that "nature mysticism and reflective mysticism differ in their appearance, but not in essence"(185) fails to reflect the different levels of the mystical experience and basically ignores the mainstream mystical scholarship; that nature mysticism, as will be seen in the following chapter, differs vastly in essence from Middle Age mysticism (which Weeks labeled reflective). I continue to cite Weeks's study, as one of the most recent and well constructed, to further illustrate the focus of German mysticism in comparison to that of non-defined mystical study. Weeks's argument is clearly also constructivist; he specifically credits his indebtedness to the work of Stephen Katz and Gerschom Scholem (3). Weeks's contention that recent scholarship rejects the idea of perennial philosophy is true but misleading, as it must be added that other recent contributions just as convincingly argue for the essential components in comparative mysticism. Each side offers merits and more importantly fuels the ongoing debate which will hopefully one day live the question itself into the answer. As Weeks sees it, "when we disregard the postulate of the universal experience and instead consider the literary-thematic aspects of mysticism, we may arrive at a better understanding of the mystic's experience" (9-10). If this attitude reflects the whole of writing and understanding of German mysticism, that it looks for the particulars in a culturally and traditionally bound manner setting it apart from other

forms of mysticism with emphasis on the experience, the actual intention of the mystic has been lost. By focusing on the parts, we may well see deeply into the specifics, yet thereby sacrifice the mystery of the whole to which the mystic path leads.

As author of Die Deutsche Mystik, Gerhard Wehr presents a comprehensive study of the history of German mysticism as accepted today. German mystics recognized in Wehr's work and significant others, receive little or no recognition in 'other,' i.e., Christian, mysticism. These include primarily philosophers of the eighteenth century such as Oetinger, Franck and Baader. Wehr presents the history of German mysticism, or *die deutsche Mystik*, as a disjunct succession, reinforced by dividing the book into two parts. The first segment, devoted to the customary medieval mystics, is followed by the theosophical counterparts at the turn of the sixteenth century. Here Wehr includes chapters on Valentin Weigel, Jacob Böhme, Johann Georg Gichtel, Angelus Silesius and Michael Hahn among others. Wehr, and again most other works on German mysticism, include the individuals cited above as mystics on theosophical grounds, which is precisely the justification Egan gives for excluding Böhme from his anthology of Christian mystics.[25]

With no further elucidation, Benz casually mentions Böhme's theosophy as though the word bore a universal definition (11). Without digressing to a matter of its own significant importance, I here only include some observations which enlightened me to the discrepancy found between, for lack of better terminology, German and American readings of Novalis. For the study of Christian mysticism, theosophical

[25] As a point of interest, Weeks does not address theosophy although Wehr is a frequently cited source.

kinship finds a diffident reception in terms of authentic mysticism. Theosophy evolved during the time of uprooting change marking the end of the sixteenth century. The term itself, Wehr elucidates, shows its affinity and roots in the *Pansophen* concerned with the All; like the pantheists, God was found through deeper recognition of natural elemental surroundings. Theosophists seek to bring elements together in the cosmos, in oneself and in the religions by sharing many elements of Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity to create this syncretistic outlook.

A brief overview of encyclopedic entries on theosophy points out interesting considerations without claiming the comparisons to be approaching exhaustive measures. German entries, notably protestant, focus on the belief of an all-permeating eternal spirit to mystically unify all things. To know oneself means to know God and be in communion with all things and all time, therefore the theosophical belief in reincarnation. The Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon finds that "es liegt im Wesen des Theosophischen, daß der Kreis des als Offenbarung empfundenen Gutes groß ist und unbestimmt bleibt, oft esoterische Zellen der Th. in allen Religionen vorausgesetzt werden" (1424). The entry in Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, cites one of the favorite passages for theosophists: "Yet God has revealed this wisdom to us through the Spirit. The Spirit scrutinizes all matters, even the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10) providing definite biblical support for the name meaning wisdom of God. This entry concedes that there is no rigid uniformity in the movement and characterizes mysticism as a sister of theosophy but also gives claim to theosophy's

"esoterische[n] Zug" (Möckel 845). The entry edited by Faivre in The Encyclopedia of Religion begins:

> theosophy is a part of a broader religious phenomenon known as esotericism. In the strict sense, the word *esotericism* refers to a gnosis that offers the individual enlightenment and salvation through a knowledge of the bonds that are believed to unite him to the world of divine or intermediary spirits. Theosophy in particular is concerned primarily with the knowledge of the hidden mysteries of divinity. (465)

The emphasis on probing into the hidden secrets and mysteries strikes harmonious chords with Heinrich von Ofterdingen in his mining expeditions and the loves of nature as interpreting the hieroglyphs of nature as theosophical endeavors: "The theosophist inquires into the hidden meaning of the ciphers or hieroglyphs of nature" (Faivre 467). An amalgam of beliefs which, strikingly enough, is frequently endowed with the adjective mystical in the German entries, but not one mention of mystical in the Encyclopedia of Religion. Where von Baader, Böhme and Weigel are claimed as mystics in German scholarship, the American refers to these names as theosophists.

To complicate things further, numerous terms found in secondary literature actually refer to the same phenomenon. To offer but one example, the terms love mysticism, bridal mysticism, Beguine mysticism, *Minnemystik* or *Brautmystik*, extravert and visionary mysticism all fundamentally refer to, but are not limited to, mysticism of the late middle ages. In addition, there exist 'homemade' concoctions such as '*persöhnlichkeitsmystik*', '*unendlichkeitsmystik*' as well as mysticism in reference to a particular person: Christ-mysticism of Paul, God-mysticism of the fourth gospel, or the material mysticism of Teilhard de Chardin (as titled by Yungblut). Standard labels and groupings have been applied in retrospect and carry

with them their inherent difficulties, though provide some sort of systematic way to apply the theory of mysticism. Though not providing a thorough comparison of German mysticism with more general mysticism, the terms can sometimes be confusing, if not misleading, when using both languages and addressing the scholarship of both countries.[26] Moreover, Germans often refer to a mystic in geographical terms. Hildegard of Bingen, or as she was known in her time—the jewel of the Rhein—is referred to by some authors as the Rhineland mystic. McGinn, on the other hand, refers to Rhineland mysticism as those followers of Meister Eckhart.

Of monumental influence to greater understanding of mysticism for both the monastic spectrum and through autobiographical writing to the secular domain was the work and writings of Thomas Merton in the 1950s and 1960s. Increasing proliferation of psychological understanding has given scientific and appropriate terminology to relate the experience of transformations of consciousness. Influence of Eastern mysticism in western thought increased understanding of contemplative spirituality by individuals such as Bede Griffith's Return to the Centre (1976), William Johnston's numerous books beginning with Silent Music (1974), the eastern teacher D.T. Suzuki who has contributed much to modern appreciation of Meister Eckhart and Swedenburg.[27]

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[26] A basic keyword search reveals that there are also topics such as French and Spanish mysticism, though not as structured as German. Though beyond my area of specific interest, I would venture to guess that similar tendencies would be found, i.e., that perhaps Joan of Arc, who is not included in Christian mysticism, may be accounted for in a work covering French mysticism.

[27] See especially D.T. Suzuki. Swedenborg: Buddha of the North, trans. Andrew Bernstein (West Chester: Swedenborg Association, 1996). Additional titles by William Johnston and Thomas Merton are listed in the Bibliography, as are comparative works by Rene Bütler and the Vietnamese monk, Thich Nhat Hanh.

For the intents of my dissertation study, in which I prefer to look at the process of mysticism in levels of experience on a continuum, the mystic is one who has undertaken and flourished in the contemplative journey, in which one not only rejoices in finding God but moreover at the prospect of resting in His found presence in "a wordless and total surrender of the heart in silence" (Merton, Contemplative Prayer 30). The twentieth century American Thomas Merton on contemplatives:

> The contemplative is one who would rather not know than know. Rather not enjoy than enjoy. Rather not have *proof* that God loves him. He accepts the love of God on faith, in defiance of all apparent evidence. This is the necessary condition, and a very paradoxical condition, for the mystical experience of the reality of God's presence and of his love for us. Only when we are able to 'let go' of everything within us, all desire to see, to know, to taste and to experience the presence of God, do we truly become able to experience that presence with the overwhelming conviction and reality that revolutionize our entire inner life.[28]

The incredible depth, truth and humility evident in this outpouring of love one does not need to ask if the writer is a mystic. Indeed, perhaps if one does have to ask oneself if a certain person is a mystic, or the subject matter at hand mystical, chances are one would be compelled to admit no—at least not yet!

The widespread definition of a mystic, as one having attained union with the Ultimate, includes a sub-clause often overlooked. The union is not a singular event, but a way of life or attitude. A mystic is balanced, harboring stability and autonomy of spirit (Maritain 233-34). This balance occurs when both sides (rational and irrational) of the brain function at their ideal states, not one at the expense of the other which causes a diseased, or dry imbalance in the practical words of Hildegard. Often

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[28]Thomas Merton Contemplative Prayer 89. These sentiments similarly expressed by John of the Cross

employing the practice of what we call negative language, mystics argue against the purely rational, scientific mode of thinking, and view their understanding as the *completion of language by incorporation of the divine to include and transcend ordinary knowledge, not the negation of it.* The use of koans in Zen Buddhism illustrate this point: as wonderful mind teasers, koans, and sage teachers of all the great traditions, dutifully frustrate the ego in its present encasement of the false self. To borrow a phrase from Thomas Keating, koans send the intellect on a coffee break to allow the true potential of the mind to gain ground. The Zen master will present a student with a *mondo* such as the following, knowing that we must shut down traditional mental facilities and let go of set patterns of thinking in order to grasp the essence:

> A Zen Master said to his disciple: "Go get my rhinoceros-horn fan."
> Disciple: "Sorry, Master, it is broken."
> Mater: "Okay, then get me the rhinoceros."

The student will meditate on, not think about, this verse until he or she stumbles upon the answer. 'Wise' denotes someone who has integrated the two modes of knowing into a healthy balance. The rational mind, perhaps clouded by pious and religious truisms, would balk at the following metaphor of the Hassidic saying: God is not nice, God is no uncle. God is an earthquake![29] Other confounding remarks include Meister Eckharts 'Pray God to rid me of God' and others previously mentioned.

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with ideas such as wanting nothing I have everything.

[29]Mystics have never believed that their words contradict religious teaching, but sought to point out that most religious practice took place on a superficial level. Eckhart used every occasion to make people 'see' that religion was an obstacle to be overcome—but not to be ignored. It is not surprising, therefore, that Cupitt finds Eckhart provocative or that some interesting studies (such as by John Caputo) have read Eckhart as a deconstructivist.

A mystic is a mystic in his or her totality engaged in living life fully and knowing true happiness. An enlightened person often exudes an overwhelming sense of presence and calm. Well marked over the ages, the mystical path is not at all mysterious. Nor is it exclusive, albeit few are able to complete the path to which all have been called. The longing for fulfillment is a life-energy sustainable in all and manifested in different stages of spiritual and psychological development.

The Journey

The spiritual path traverses three levels of experiencing reality. Everyday consciousness, or reality, catches of glimpse of ultimate reality in the middle level and is then drawn to experience the fullness of the third level. The vernacular use of the term romanticism implies this ability to see things differently (specifically—more idealistically) as they are; yet the mystic is one who sees and accepts things as they really are as the following story so succinctly illustrates:

> "There are three stages in one's spiritual development," said the Master. "The carnal, the spiritual and the divine."
>
> "What is the carnal stage?" asked the eager disciples.
>
> "That's the stage when trees are seen as trees and mountains as mountains."
>
> "And the spiritual?"
>
> "That's when one looks more deeply into things- then trees are no longer trees and mountains no longer mountains."
>
> "And the divine?"
>
> "Ah, that's Enlightenment," said the Master with a chuckle, "when trees become trees again and mountains, mountains."[30]

[30]Anthony de Mello, One Minute Wisdom (New York: Image, 1988) 47. These lines demonstrate dynamic Sunyata—emptiness is dynamic as it as fullness as well.

Three operative levels of reality, or three worlds, found the basis of experience and are interdependent as an integrated whole: the phenomenal, the psychic, and the enlightened world. Authentic mysticism, at the level of having attained true union, is found in John of the Cross, Meister Eckhart and Thomas Merton and mysticism generally associated with that of the East, especially Zen Buddhism. A lifelong devotion to intense inner work, i.e., meditation or contemplation may lead into the ultimate experience of Absolute Reality. Classically transcribed in the negative terms previously explained, the positive (thought) no longer prevails to allow the negative experience—the void, nothingness or non-dual. While in elementary moments of transcendental bliss there may exist feelings of union, the deepest level is not simply the merging of subject and object, but a ceasing of duality. This is the truest and deepest experience of wholeness. Noticeably, a narration of this experience can only be fully understood by someone who has 'been there,' making it very difficult to include in discursive thought, as Anthony de Mello suggests in the following short narrative teaching:

> The disciples were absorbed in a discussion of Lao-tzu's dictum: "Those who know do not say; those who say do not know."
> When the Master entered, they asked him exactly what the words meant.
> Said the Master, "Which of you knows the fragrance of a rose?"
> All of them knew.
> Then he said, "Put it into words."
> All of them were silent. (137)

The intermediate level, that of the psychic world is the fascinating world of legends and visions, in short, the imagination. Inner and outer worlds interact, spirits, both evil and benevolent, interact with the self. This realm, referred to as the 'spiritual inclination to look more deeply into things' in the Homecoming example given above, allows the freedom for the expanding self of the Romantics and freedom from the boundary of reason familiar to ordinary consciousness. The psychic world serves as

foundation for the numerous revelations of mystical experiences, and it is the level or point of insight of artists and poets. The necessary distinction, which must be drawn between the Illuminative (of the psychic) and the Unitive (most advanced), revolves around the individuality of the subject, which remains separate in the psychic. The words themselves may appear to have superceded all boundaries, yet the self still exists as a separate entity. In other words, the "I" expands so that God can be included which is a heightening, rather than obliteration, of the self (the latter being necessary for an unmediated experience).

With similar elucidation, the Dalai Lama distinguishes between the levels of mind:

> The division of mind into various levels of consciousness is not done in terms of the basic entity of mind which is luminosity and cognition. Rather, it seems that these divisions are made in terms of a subtle energy on which the mind rides. There are three categories of such consciousness: coarse, subtle, and very subtle. Now what are the coarse levels of consciousness? They are the consciousness of the sense organs. What are the subtle levels of consciousness? They are the different levels of mental conceptions.[31]

The subtle level, of similar material to that of the psychic, is just beyond the coarse everyday consciousness. The subtle is further divided so that characteristics of the level could resemble more of the phenomenal than that of the transcendent. His Holiness continues that the very subtle stages (of which there are four) each form one higher rung to emptiness. This material comprises the famous treatise The Tibetan Book of the Dead in which the body-mind complex of the subtle level is tiered into graduating categories of luminance, radiance, and imminence. This fascinating section of the Indian classic includes a description of the lowest of these subtle rankings that

[31] In Donald Mitchell and James Wiseman, eds, The Gethsemani Encounter (New York: Continuum, 1998).

offers an eastern twist to Novalis. The initial phase, luminance, is likened to moonlight and carries with it an associated instinctual pattern of desire. In order to be liberated from this world, the dying soul must take all care not to *reflect* on its state, but be at attention in 'naked intent' meaning that one must be open to the workings of the spirit. In terms of consciousness, it is helpful to remember that the transient individual passes through stages which themselves remain permanent. The mystic delicately seeks to remind us that we are not separate entities but connect as part of a collective history on different levels.

The three levels of reality offer an introductory insight into the levels of reality that Underhill splits into five-point elaboration and Wilber further into nine, or even arguably ten levels. St. Theresa shows the seven stages of prayer, which correspond to a certain degree to levels of consciousness. Rather than detail the manifold versions clarifying the classic threefold way of illumination, purification and union (Dionysius), I would prefer to summarize in brief Evelyn Underhill's classic exegesis of the mystical path delineated in Mysticism (1911). Given her discerned understanding of mysticism, she clearly shows, by means of presenting stages of consciousness, that union with the Absolute can be manifested in as many variations and levels as there are experiences, yet true union, as an experience of pure consciousness, defies being captured in words and is a universal experience. The perennialist Underhill provides a vital presentation on the history, thought and lineage of western mysticism, and devotes the second half of her book Mysticism to an elaborate discussion on the *progressive* stages of spiritual development. Additionally,

her humble and lucid manner of presenting the study of 'ineffable' experiences supports her own immersion into the practice and renders it accessible to her readers.[32]

Underhill expands the three principal components to five classifications of the mystical way: (1) the self's awakening to a higher consciousness which (2) realizing its own inadequacy, the individual enters rigorous routine to facilitate purgation: "a state of pain and effort" which allows for (3) an ecstatic experience of illumination which has the ability to transform the soul if it is ripe to enter (4) "the most terrible of all the experiences of the Mystic Way: the final and complete purification of the Self which is called by some contemplatives the 'mystic pain' or 'mystic death' by others the Purification of the Spirit or Dark Night of the Soul [John of the Cross]" (Mysticism 169-70). This stage tests the soul's willingness and ability to completely surrender to the will of God so that in (5) the goal of the mystic path, that of Ultimate Union, "that permanent establishment of life upon transcendent levels of reality"(Underhill Mysticism 170).

The stages, as scholars and mystics unanimously support, defy being seen as a linear or chronological process. The initial 'awakening' to a higher state of consciousness as a sudden moment of insight is a typical appraisal of the first stage. This can be as ordinary as experiencing a deep connection with a person or, as an extreme, Saul's blinding conversion en route to Damascus. It is interesting to note that the awakening incident as it is often noted typically comes at the brink of adulthood, around eighteen years of age. As legend has it, Jacob Böhme answered the

[32] I am thinking here especially of the following book: Evelyn Underhill, Practical Mysticism: A Little Book for Normal People (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1915).

divine call as sparkling earth ware interrupted his work cleaning shoes, Thomas Merton came to the realization his life needed change while critically ill during his first year at Columbia, Ludwig Tieck's experienced a spiritual encounter as a young adult and Novalis's life changed after the mystical experience at Sophie's grave. Moreover, awakening to a higher dimension often occurs during illness or when the bodily defenses are down. Though it may prove life-transforming, this experience in not in itself mystical, but may be an initiation to the hitherto unknown mystical sphere. Heinrich von Ofterdingen undergoes an awakening before entering the cave, or perhaps in preparation for entering the cave and being confronted with the provincial book. His mind has wandered, having been expanded by conversation with the miner, and walking through the woods at dusk has brought to the fore mythical and magical forces. Heinrich experiences an illumination:

> Die Worte des Alten hatten eine versteckte Tapetentür in ihm geöffnet. Er sah sein kleines Wohnzimmer dicht an einen erhabenen Münster gebaut, aus dessen steinernem Boden die ernste Vorwelt emporstieg, während von der Kuppel die klare fröhliche Zukunft in goldnen Engelskindern ihr singend entgegenschwebte. Gewaltige Klänge bebten in den silbernen Gesang, und zu den weiten Toren traten alle Kreaturen herein, von denen jede ihre innere Natur in einer einfachen Bitte und in einer eigentümlichen Mundart vernehmlich aussprach. Wie wunderte er sich, daß ihm diese klare, seinem Dasein schon unentbehrliche Ansicht so lange fremd geblieben war. Nun übersah er auf einmal alle seine Verhältnisse mit der weiten Welt um ihn her; fühlte, was er durch sie geworden und was sie ihm werden würde, und begriff alle seltsamen Vorstellungen und Anregungen, die er schon oft in ihrem Anschauen gespürt hatte. (1, 252)

The experience illuminates a door hitherto hidden, which upon opening, reveals an undiscovered panoramic view. Illuminated to various degrees, journeyers encounter joyous occasions vacillating with periods of darkness, a process commonly intermittent during an extended period of purgation (second phase). As the darker

passages of the mystical journey find importance in subsequent chapters, suffice it to mention at this time that no matter how ingrained 'dark nights or times' has become in our vocabulary, the mystical understanding is undoubtedly deeper. Purgation may be a slow process over half a lifetime or intensified during a retreat setting of up to eight hours devoted to meditation. Purgation is healing in preparation for emergence of the divine indwelling; how much healing depends on the psychological health, personality and openness of the individual. The repentant is overcome at times with perfect sorrow and as the classic treatise on the spiritual journey, The Cloud of Unknowing teaches, the cleansing properties of this sorrow concurrently allow for the awakening of a complete and holy desire for God. Through it all, Jesus the healer is at work. There is an interesting analogy of the poet as healer to parallel the image of God as all knowing therapist. Keating talks about God as the divine therapist; Novalis the poet: "Poesie ist die große Kunst der Construction der transcendentalen Gesundheit. Der Poët ist also der transcendentale Arzt" (2, 535). But the poet can be many things as by nature of his art, the poet can be anything he wants or desires.

Underhill points out that illumination, which 'brings a certain apprehension of the Absolute, a sense of the Divine Presence: but not true union with it. It is a state of happiness" (Mysticism 169) typically motivates artists who have been touched with what Friedrich Schlegel explains is the feeling of the sublime. This experience of the sublime is a mark of transcendental philosophy that finds one longing for the infinite, and according to Schlegel, the highest sense in humans. We must remember that for Schlegel and his colleagues, however, philosophy was also infinite. As stated before but bears repeating, not all artists are therefore mystics. The fourth phase, the final complete emptying and purifying phase at the eve of the spiritual marriage, separates those few who will enter the deified life. While the illuminations were a pleasurable

foretaste begging for poetic expression, Ken Wilber writes of the deeper experience that a "direct realization of union is not poetry. It is as direct as a glass of water in the face" (One Taste 57). Rude awakening, also, to the vastness of the journey still ahead.

Attachment to the psychic realm of consciousness exhibits a glorified sense of self derived from the intensely sense-related visions and seemingly otherworldly experiences to which the ego attaches immense value and gratification. Peak experiences, for instance, may well be mystical and often are; yet whether they be revelations of God is another matter. In the introduction to Light from Light, Louis Dupré broaches the topic of what constitutes a text as mystical. Careful consideration of 'mystical' writings if taken as just literary value, could include lunatic hallucinations, drug-induced fantasies on the surface indistinguishable from certain infused mystical writings. William James (Varieties of Religious Experience) and R. C. Zaehner (Mysticism Sacred and Profane) each present a telling comparison of the descriptions of reported true mystical experiences alongside those drug induced. Expression through artistic medium comes naturally as an outlet for the intense joy or pain having been experienced. Although Fredrick Franck notes that Angelius Selesius wrote the verses found in the Cherubric Wanderer in a state of *satori* within four days and nights, it is commonly agreed that the artistic expression succeeds the experience itself. This is why mystical traditions teach practice under the guidance of a spiritual teacher, one who has undertaken the spiritual journey him or herself and has received the gift of discernment. Relating transpersonal experiences does not validate mystical maturity.

To quote Underhill again: "To truly grasp the truest form of a mystical experience, to experience God and not an experience of God, requires the most difficult task of renouncing all attachments, especially mental and emotional, to

transcend the realm of the psychic world" (Mysticism 112). On the mystic path, one must accept illuminative and dark experiences as gifts from God, let go of them, and move on. Becoming attached to the experience hinders further progress on the journey since one longs to remain at the blissful level. Translated into psychological terms today, attachments are addictions; addictions to love, material wealth, substances, fame, and most importantly the glorification of the ego all lead to glamorous illusions of grandeur. St. John cautions to resist temptation to gloat (to oneself and others) of having been chosen by God or otherwise bask in the wealth of spiritual materialism (using charismatic gifts for oneself or the accumulation of spiritual goods as some examples). Providing that we suffer addictions in the form of compulsive behavior, we can not experience complete freedom. The purification of the self is a constant companion that must undergo numerous levels of death on the path to wholeness. This is, in effect, how I see Merton's opinion given above that mysticism is the cure for Angst ridden humanity today. Humanity, ever since the first axial period and the emergence of the individual and a defined notion of the ego, has lived in a paradoxical relationship to that which most defines us. The Angst provoking illusion is that if we were to lose our self, we would have and be nothing. Holding on to the ego-self is our greatest obstacle to freedom, as only one who loses his self will find it.

In psychological language, cleansing is the unloading of the unconscious, the gradual purging of our false self-system, covered in detail in the fifth chapter. The false self is the ego, the mental, psychological and emotional faculties to which we apply great worth but is in actuality but an illusion, what the Buddhists call *samsara*. Purgation removes all the obstacles to inner freedom, the personal as well as the spiritual. While it is not uncommon for this person to demonstrate a greater number of

charitable acts of random kindness, reevaluate priorities etc., this doing is not a mental exercise for them, but is seen more in terms of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit bearing fruit. I emphasize this to demonstrate a common fallacy such as found in William Inge. To support his naming of the poet Wordsworth "the greatest prophet of this branch of contemplative mysticism" (Christian 305), Inge relates that the romantic poet spent his purgative years working to rid himself of undesirable traits, such as his passions, desire for wealth, etc. While these exercises abet the personal journey, there is yet the spiritual to undergo.

Mortification is a process of a gradual death to the self.[33] Often intertwined with love, the relationship of death and love is an appropriate pair of terms to discuss in Novalis, especially in the novel Heinrich von Ofterdingen. Every religious tradition understands that it is necessary to die to attain true union with the Absolute. Yet the physical death is only the poetic representation of an inner death. In Return to the Centre, Bede Griffiths establishes three levels of dying (without bodily death) involved to depict the mystical notion of death: "...there is a threefold death through which everyone must pass—a death to the world, a death to the flesh and a death to the ego" (90). Griffiths proceeds to point out that the great cultures of the world were built on the firm belief that only upon renouncing yourself can you discover your real being. An underlying belief in Novalis, albeit never quite perfected, is that freedom comes from detachment to things. While the Romantics were attached to emotions, material and learned intellectual wealth assumed a much less prestigious ranking to

[33] I have tried to avoid misleading quotations as the following instance by Feilchenfeld: "Erst der Tod, so führt Lavater aus, bedeutet den Eingang ins wahre Leben" (41) which is certainly not an idea solely attributed to Lavater! While the author presumably was aware of this, I will make every effort to emphasize the commonality of such thoughts among religions of the world and progressive thinkers, again to stress the journey over the words themselves.

artistic and mental creative genius.[34] Though the process of individuation is an individual experience, the mystic is very much devoted to bringing the experience to fruition in the service of others. The mystic seeks solitude to then serve humanity as committed social responsibility. Being socially aware and knowing that one is responsible for another person's actions is a sign of spiritual development religious traditions have yet to demonstrate. As chapter five explores, actions at this level are detached and thereby offer exemplary love capable of serving all. The mystic, much along the lines of the artist, does not feel fulfilled until the experience is shared not merely to delight us, but to enlighten us. Novalis writes from this perspective stating that it is the role of the writer to serve as prophet to enlighten the world.

Ken Wilber

The different levels of reality outlined above correspond to various levels of consciousness. Convinced that the experience of the highest level of consciousness in all traditions comes by having traversed the levels as synergized by Ken Wilber, it is therefore possible to get beyond a comparison of experiences to the perfection of one's own journey. One's own tradition frames the journey, yet these differences need not be identified as separating issues, but rather as unifying what is of actual interest. Most importantly, Wilber's model puts the rational and irrational into perspective to call

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[34]Franz Sternbald occasionally reassures himself on this point as fellow travelers ask him of what use it be to work as a painter if it does not bring in financial stability. He becomes uneasy as the practical mind questions the artistic. Yet he quickly reassures himself that the benefits of art far outweigh any practical consideration and that 'others just don't understand'. The experiential nature of mysticism, implying that it is impossible to gain full understanding of a mystical experience by theoretical knowledge and must indeed be experienced.

attention to the misrepresented belief that anything transpersonal is of mystical quality. Simplified, Wilber presents a scale of consciousness identifying the various level of transpersonal activity (Brief History 139):

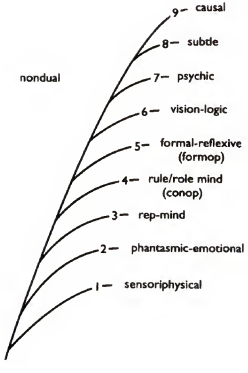

Figure 1 The Basic Structure of Consciousness

Wilber observes that the evolution of personal consciousness reflects human evolution. As the history of humanity began concerned with purely physical and biological needs, so the infant is born needing these issues addressed. Additionally, primary needs remain our fundamental concern throughout life. The graph gives these levels in a ladder image to suggest that the ladder preexists our self reaching higher levels allowing us to experience higher rungs by way of a peak experience or the like

without necessarily developing at that point. Each level must be successfully processed on three sub-phases: fusion, differentiation and integration. As Wilber summarizes, the inability of the self to move beyond fusion on any level preempts a fixation. Failure to integrate is a repression. As chapter four investigates, this is why knowledge of the self is so important, since unresolved and repressed conflicts inhibit our functioning out of the true self. Malfunctioning self-initiated actions brought on by fixations, disassociations and repressions distort the remaining process for the psychotherapist to later untangle.

In his immense tome Sex, Ecology, Spirituality: The Spirit of Evolution (1995), Wilber counters the limitations set forth by a view of ruling hierarchies rather than holarchies. Wilber appropriates the term holon from Arthur Koestler's notion that reality is composed of holons, "wholes that are simultaneously parts of other wholes, with no upward or downward limit" (Sex 35). The strength of this picture of reality is that it is in accordance with both scientific and idealistic thinking, since everything can be seen as a whole emerging over time. Holons are living entities having the innate potential to include and transcend and thereby grow to construct a holarchy of nested truths. Eventually one sees the interconnectedness of all things, and beyond that, the oneness of all. Spirit, which Wilber recognizes as the highest level of holon, transcends and includes all, thereby permeating all.

Navigating four quadrants, or the four pillars of the kosmos, holons work in tandem to unify the intentional, behavioral, social and cultural aspects of humanity. To integrate and not only access the next level of consciousness, all four quadrants

must be addressed. Since transformations must occur on all levels, it is difficult to assess the romantic finding of the higher self in only one of the four quadrants and not, as Wilber explains, developing roots which stretch as well. Connecting to the higher self, should in fact, not be seen as "the end of all problems but the beginning of the immense and difficult new work to be done" (Sex 496). As Wilber continues, the higher self must be sought with the other quadrants, including the social, in mind. As will be discussed more closely in the fourth chapter, many agree with Wilber that "the higher self camp is notoriously immune to social concerns" (Sex 516).

The following paragraphs summarize the personal levels of development as they lead into the transpersonal. Development begins from the point of fusion at fulcrum-1. At about four to five months the self learns to differentiate itself from the other. Already at this stage, severe psychological damage may set in if the self is not successfully integrated, meaning that if somehow the infant's immediate needs are not met, adverse effect on emotional if not physical level. Not unexpectedly, the problems embedded into our unconscious from the early years are the most difficult to confront in the later years. Fulcrum-2 is the narcissistic world of the one-and-a-half-year-old who awakens as a two-year old to the reality that he or she is a separate entity. The following level transcends the exclusively emotional level to enter the world of representation and linguistic structures.

Fulcrum-4 corresponds to Piaget's concrete operational cognition. This paradigm shift allows six-year olds to step outside themselves and into the role of another, hence role-playing and social scripts characterizing this level. Formal

operations, which present the opportunity for global perspectives, emerge in fulcrum-5 (eleven to fifteen years old). Fulcrum-6 Wilber identifies as the last stage accepted by convention. This level of vision-logic integrates the mind and body in a relatively autonomous self. Meta-cognitive thought processes work into this existential level, since fusion in fulcrum-6 mandates the acceptance of the finite life of the personal realm. Yet, as Wilber so adeptly intuits, living at the brink of the transpersonal realm without recognizing it exists as an existentialist makes for a pessimistic world-view.

Fulcrum-6 is the end of reality as most people accept it. Capable of imagining, the rational mind is not as separate from the ideal dreaming as the romantics believed. Moreover, Wilber stresses that the next level of consciousness appears other-worldly to the present state, not as something the present is evolving into. This is true for explaining early stages of development as well as for explaining transpersonal developments for someone in the rational mind never having had an experience of higher insight (such as those on fulcrum-5, centaur). Yet the four levels of transcendent reality stretch to the non-dual, the most advanced state of mystical consciousness. Fulcrum-7, as the first of the transpersonal realm, will be addressed fully within the dissertation, as it is this level (actually fulcrum 6-7) in which I find the romantic consciousness to have temporarily accessed, though not integrated. While for practical purposes the psychic level is considered a mystical stage, it is on the level of artistic intuition or as the level of 'spiritual seeing' described as the second level of reality in the Zen story on reality. It is a source of inspiration for people still grounded in the personal realm, or can be the stepping stone to complete the journey to its fullest

degree. Breaking up the transpersonal stages to follow those of the personal helps in the comparison of metaphors, since an experience of night, on the sixth level of conscious development compared with John of the Cross, who speaks from the ninth, or causal level of experience, must be interpreted from the depths whence the experience originates. For the most part, Novalis interpreters fail to take the subtle differences into account and mass anything transpersonal in a category in the irrational and hence mystical.

A nature-mystical experience of losing sole identification with the self to temporarily embody, or feel union with the grand universe or a part of it hallmarks fulcrum-7. Schelling's *Weltseele* portrays the fusion phase of the first of the transpersonal stages. Wilber reminds us that this experience is a natural progression and common to sensitive personalities. I would add that the profundity of literature and teachings today give a how-to approach to finding this 'zone' of experience to facilitate a performance, whether athletic, artistic or creative giving it more of a psychological flair than spiritual. All three phases (fusion, differentiation and integration) must be addressed on all four quadrants. Only when all four components are addressed does one move to fulcrum-8, the subtle level of consciousness. On this rather evolved level the fusion takes place with an archetypal type of being, which is why Wilber calls this form deity mysticism. Wilber differentiates Jungian archetypes from 'real' archetypes, which are

> subtle seed-forms upon which all of manifestation depends. In deep states of contemplative awareness, one begins to understand that the entire Kosmos emerges straight out of Emptiness, out of primordial Purity, out of nirguna Brahman, out of the Dharmakaya, and the first *Forms* that emerge out of this

> Emptiness are the basic Forms upon which all lesser forms depend for their being. (A Brief 217)

The experience of this level cannot be understood from the personal realm, as the "meditative phenomena [exist] in the subtle worldspace" (Wilber A Brief 217).

The emptiness itself out of which the primordial archetypes emerge manifests itself in fulcrum-9 as the causal (see this level as beginning of all and as such the one true basis for all archetypes) level of experience. In this experience of pure consciousness there is no more merging of subject-object as both of these categories cease to exist. Ruusbroec depicts this awareness as the experience of descent into an image-less bareness which is God himself (157). When all three phases of fulcrum-9 are thoroughly integrated, one reaches beyond all levels, which is the non-dual, completely transcending and including all. No personal self exists and one becomes pure love as there is no longer anything to repress our true nature, which is compassionate love.

For his discussion on the romantic period, Wilber includes Habermas' Communication and the Evolution of Society to frame the argument of regressive romantic thinking. [35] One of the strongest points Habermas makes in Communication, and which Wilber elaborates, is that eulogizing tribal clans in their intimate appreciation of nature rests on a fundamental mistaken premise, as it is solely lack of

[35] It was when I came upon the forward to the new edition (1996) of The Atman Project that one of my mounting suspicions concerning Wilber's forthright denunciation of Romantic thought was confirmed; Wilber confesses that for a long time, he, too, had fallen for the Romantic ways to "make regression into a source of salvation" (Atman x). Wilber fully realizes that he is prone to attack the wrongs he sees in a theory he knew and lived so well: " I could write what many people felt to be crippling criticisms of them. You are never so vicious toward a theory as toward one that you yourself recently embraced" (Atman x). I have found few scholarly writings about the romantic period that address the regressive

development which unites them. The tribes lacked both the resources and perhaps even the will to inflict the harm now available to society. Much of Wilber's argument lies on his successful execution of the pre/trans fallacy, which is simply yet devastatingly, failing to differentiate the "prerational (or prepersonal) states of awareness [with the] transrational (or transpersonal) states" (Sex 205-6). Wilber further finds that the Romantics lay victims of the pre/trans fallacy, which he sees as "the confusion of prerational with transrational simply because both are nonrational" (Marriage 92). To paraphrase Wilber, there is a subsisting either/or mentality in regards to reason; either the rational or the irrational. Unfortunately, this perspective fails to distinguish an immature from a mature irrational perspective. Freud, to use Wilber's example of a reductionist view in which all trans-rational (mature) states are reduced to pre-rational states, erred in this manner by confusing "genuine mystical or contemplative experience...as a regression or throwback to infantile states of narcissism, oceanic adualism, indissociation, and even primitive autism" (Sex 206). The elevationist position, such as found in Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell in their work of mythology provides examples of the other extreme. This position elevates the states of pre-rational status to equal that of the higher state; narcissism as mystical union as an apt example. Furthermore, there is a tendency in this thinking to assimilate the non-rational with the spiritual. Not to be taken as absolute terms, these tendencies warrant acknowledgment, as the later especially finds relevance to

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issue quite as intensely as does Wilber, though selected critics do find the romantic idealizing of the past problematic.

romantic beliefs. As a secondary concern, certain views of the romantic period today evince an evolutionist position.

The skeletal rendition of the levels of development provided falls short of addressing the complexity that faces the self. Cognitive, personal, moral, social development are only a selection of those included in this one framework, and each matures independently to constitute the whole. As previously stated, each fulcrum must differentiate in order to integrate and not dissociate. Otherwise, we would not have to include and transcend in order to mature. The romantics, Wilber finds (and he attacks primarily the influential German idealists setting Schelling aside), failed to distinguish between differentiation and dissociation. Wilber points out that for the romantics, the oak tree was in some perverted manner a violation of the acorn, meaning that the healthy natural stages of differentiation were confused and bound to the pathological understanding of disassociation, i.e., that we need to reconnect with our 'acornness'.[36] For the romantic mindset, wholeness only existed in the stage prior to differentiation. In addition to Wilber's motto of 'transcend and include' is the idea that 'surfaces can be seen, but depth must be interpreted.' This is particularly helpful for the issue of language, since mystics and romantics consider words as pointers to a greater reality left for us to interpret.

[36] A fittingly similar word by Eckhart: "the seed of God is in us. Given an intelligent and hardworking farmer, it will thrive and grow up to God, whose seed it is; and accordingly its fruits will be God-nature. Pear sees grow into per trees, nut seeds into nut tree, and God seed into God" (cited in Huxley 39). Novalis has the noted words that everything is seed. We are given our life to make something of pure potential, not to remain as we were born.

CHAPTER 3
THE ALLURE OF NATURE:
INVITING THE ARTIST TO EMBRACE THE MYSTIC

The romantic and the mystic path intertwine to a most indistinguishable point when the role of the artist intersects with that of the mystic. The artist and the mystic color a similar vision of the universe—and of the individual's place in it. Most apparent is the longing to go beyond the firmly incorporated confines of society to seek that which is as yet undefined territory. Through the artistic medium, the artist, sensitive to transcendental insight, longs to poetize or romanticize the world. Artists, romantics and mystics on the nature mysticism level seek to awaken in others the dormant ability to live full and meaningful lives they themselves have experienced, at least momentarily. Transforming us as we experience it, timeless art is usually judged by its effect on us. Affirming the beauty of life, the romantics responded to the call to awaken to the glory of God as the "Creative Principle" (Björkman).

Rather than focus outwardly, both mystics and artists concentrate on their inner beings and seek to change individual perspective. One finds a shared intuitive notion in writers as artists to counteract the scientific method of looking at particular details to construct a work as a living whole. The objects of artistic contemplation may be of the world, but the intuitive spirit creates from the innermost being. As Friedrich Schlegel writes in his Ideen, an artist carries his center within himself (45). Novalis

accentuates the redemptive power of poetry, in its effect much like music, to raise consciousness. For Novalis, the poet is one who has reached the apex of self-actualization, much, it could be argued, as is the mystic seen in terms of spiritual progress. I quote the following passage from Underhill at length as she clearly underscores the role of artist in society and addresses additionally the difficulty and potential for misunderstanding in relating an experience to someone who has not shared it:

> The mystic may say, is bound to say with St. Bernard 'My secret to myself'. This can only be understood by those who are already on the way. But the artist cannot act thus. On him has been laid the duty of expressing something of that which he perceives. He is bound to till his love. By means of veils and symbols he must interpret his free vision, his glimpse of the burning bush, to other men. He is the mediator between his brethren and the divine, for art is the link between appearance and reality. ... *But we do not call every one who has these partial and artistic intuitions of reality a mystic, any more than we call every one a musician who has learned to play the piano.* The true mystic is the person in whom such powers transcend the merely artistic and visionary stage and are exalted to the point of genius: in whom the transcendental consciousness can dominate the normal consciousness, and who has definitely surrendered himself to the embrace of Reality. As artists stand in a peculiar relation to the phenomenal world, receiving rhythms and discovering truths and beauties which are hidden from other men, so this true mystic stands in a peculiar relation to the transcendental world. There experiencing actual, but to us unimaginable tension and delight. ...He sees a different world. As other men are immersed in and react to natural or intellectual life, so the mystic is immersed in and reacts to spiritual life. (emphasis added, Mysticism 75-6)

This passage points to differences among the varying degrees of mystical awareness where similarities are usually quickly drawn. Underhill points out that the artist responds to a higher calling; this experience however, though having the potential to shape consciousness, is itself not indication of change. Mirroring the extraordinary words of Thomas Merton which head this dissertation, Underhill also

finds that while the artist searches for sources of inspiration, the mystic longs to be an inspiration, the latter demonstrating depth of global consciousness.

A devout, intimate appreciation of nature (primarily natural surroundings and the aesthetic quality of art and life as infused with spirit and therefore part of innermost self of human) as divine manifestation provides a common thread linking the nineteenth century artist Novalis with the ideas of the seventeenth century Böhme who in turn had been greatly influenced by Plotinus—that of nature mystics. An experience of nature mysticism transpires when the separate self appears to dissipate at an intense feeling of identity with an object of nature. During this time, there is no separation between subject and object. Most everyone has at some time been subject to some ineffably blissful feeling while communing with nature; the more introverted and artistic, the deeper the experience.

> To see God in nature, to attain a radiant consciousness of the 'otherness' of natural things, is the simplest and commonest form of illumination. Most people, under the spell of emotion or of beauty, have known flashes of *rudimentary* vision of this kind...nature mysticism. (emphasis added, Underhill Mysticism 22)

Experiences of unification with nature can open up to a higher dimension of self, or in other words be an invitation to the higher cosmic conscious available to us. Furthermore, some personalities naturally have heightened sensitivity, often found to be true of intuitive artists, or those having disciplined and exercised mindful awareness to expand the senses such as the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius or any number of meditative exercises to increase awareness, mindfulness and concentration. Often our initial introduction to the momentary suspension of time, of self and of everyday consciousness, the psychological phenomenon of a peak experience opens us

to a degree of wonder never before experienced. Driven to declare poetical experiences of nature, poets transcribe the memories into timeless poetry. Blake (a disciple of Böhme) intuits that everything that lives is holy or that eternity can be found in grain of sand,[1] whilst Hugo von Hofmannsthal witnesses the whole world as God's poem. These experiences demonstrate the artist's gifts of the first degree of mystical intuition.

The romantic and the mystic share a great love of nature and so it provides a pivotal point of conjecture for the study of romanticism and mysticism. In a chapter on Hinduism from the book entitled Mysticism East and West Carmody and Carmody depict one of the important characteristics of mystics as nature oriented:

> Mystics are sensitive to both the symbolic actions of the outer natural world and the processes of the inner human spirit. To any significant natural phenomenon (dawn, sunset, storm, drought), they bring a keen eye and a will to find in the phenomenon a provocation to come closer to the real, to join themselves more intimately with the divine. (36)

So too, it is readily arguable, does Novalis seek to find the deeper meaning hidden in natural elements. Poetry succumbs to the attraction of genuine contemplation, stemming, as do the works of the mystics, from near the center of the soul. Beyond mere aesthetic pleasure or social commentary, pure art can lead us to experience transformations of consciousness. The contemplative, through his work, is led to surrender his creative spirit to the total experience of God, celebrating 'not I, but Christ in me'. Mystics note that music and lyric poetry, which celebrate the sense of hearing, best broach the mystical dilemma of attempting to make tangible an ineffable experience by suggestion. Underhill suggests that the more visually descriptive forms,

[1] To these revered lines of a nature mystic, Wilber adds that the next level of conscious would see that the world *is* a grain of sand, and that heaven *is* a flower (Spectrum 72).

such as the visual dramatic arts, are easier to understand on a more global level (76).[2] Poetry has the suggestive quality most evocative of the abstract level of music, which for both artists and mystics is held in esteem as highest level of art. As John of the Cross clarifies, the role of the 'unknown' remains beyond the grasp of the sense and the intellect, and does not signify a meaning hidden in some occult, magic or ritual. Meister Eckhart states the following in a sermon on the Unknown:

> Hier wo wir uns empfangend verhalten, sind wir vollkommener, als wenn wir wirkten. Darum sprach ein Meister, daß die Kraft des Hörens auf viel höherer Stufe stände als die Kraft des Sehens, denn man lernt mehr Weisheit mit dem Hören als mit dem Sehen und lebt hier mehr in der Weisheit... Das Hören bringt mehr herein, aber das *Sehen zeigt mehr hinaus*. Und darum werden wir im ewigen Leben viel seliger sein in der Kraft des Hörens als in der Kraft des Sehens. Denn das Werk des Hörens des ewigen Wortes ist in mir, und das Werk des Sehens geht von mir, und beim Hören bin ich empfangend und beim Sehen wirkend. (emphasis added, 30-1)

The italics emphasize the distinction between hearing as receptive and seeing as active, which nicely categorizes the active ego-driven work of the romantics. Herder praised the aural arts, music and poetry.[3] Poetry in this sense seeks not to

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[2] In a rather lengthy witness to the power of poetry and the visual arts (2, 573-5), Novalis finds that the art of the visual is more difficult than music and at this time, finds the visual product a greater form of art. This contention contradicts other aphorisms.

[3] In early romantic philosophy, language was the outward representation of inner states of consciousness. Herder's essay "On the Origin of Language" rejects the notion of divine origin of language for the belief that it truly a construct of human intellect. Analogous to his cyclical understanding of the history of cultures and mankind, Herder traces a similar process of language 'flowering'; sprouting, blossoming, blooming, withering and decaying. Herder finds that early language was high pitched, passionate and flourished in its ability to genuinely marvel by being full of rich and image-evoking metaphors, in other words, poetry. Kristin Pfefferkorn in Novalis: A Romantic's Theory of Language and Poetry, accentuates Herder's evocation of poetry as one which glorifies the aural sense, which she contrasts to Fichte's theory of language as in its primary orientation as hieroglyphic. Prose, being well-formed and manly, was then to be followed by advanced age (Classical period) with its correctness instead of beauty and hence appropriate for the philosophical age of language. Language for the romantics was at once extremely elemental, i.e. every stone and river shared a language (or there were an infinite number of languages), yet only humans practiced 'reflective circumspection' (Pfefferkorn 199). Though Herder recognized in nature his teacher, mother and all, human language does not imitate her (Pfefferkorn 198-204). Perhaps Novalis believed that through language, we could reconnect with our elemental nature.

explain, but to *be* in all its essence. It is with acute observation that Kittler identifies Ofterdingen as the "perfect listener" ("Discourse on Discourse" 163), the observing, taking in on a level (ideally) without reflection, which however, could ensue.

To recall from the previous chapter, the experience of nature mysticism is a defined aspect of the second state of the mystical journey (illumination in the psychic world), which brings about certain joyful sense of the Divine Presence, yet is not in true union with it. Union, in a true mystical sense, is not an identification with, but a becoming the other while remaining yourself. Nature mysticism shows affinities with the first of the three transpersonal stages of consciousness each characterizing a particular worldview; the psychic, deity and non-dual. Coming back to 'reality', we realize the boundaries of our mind tied to reason and understanding have been superceded to touch on that of 'otherworldly', the realm beyond the everyday consciousness. At this revelation, Wilber writes, the 'World Soul', which opens to expanse of consciousness, begins to form. Another variation on the three levels of mystical life is given by Tauler, who known for his sermons, vitalizes his language with zealous belief that spoke to all members of his medieval society. He simply refers to the lowest, middle and highest stages of mystical life, of which the first, again, is most appropriate for the kind of mystical understanding I find designatory of romantic:

> The first stage, a life of spirituality and virtue, brings us close to God's presence, and in order to attain this, we must turn completely to the wonderful works of God and to the manifestations of the ineffable gifts which overflow from God's hidden Goodness. (141)

Tauler suggests that in this stage, the soul is at 'jubilato', yet blissfully unaware that the next stage to come is spiritual poverty, during which the soul feels helplessly lost and abandoned but being prepared to enter the highest form which is the transformation of the whole being into divinized life. I see the insights that nature offers the poet within the structure offered by Thomas Keating on the stages of contemplation, which follow that of the stages already outlined. The romantic fits into the first category: seeing God in all things is the first level of contemplation, which is strengthened by the empowering sense of God's love towards the individual, explains Thomas Keating. The next level is the deeper realization that I actually love God, and that therefore all of nature is a gift from God. Then finally we come to the third level, knowing that God gives himself in all things, a revelation made known only in intimate union.

For the romantic the reservation holds, however, that the motivation was forever centered on the ideal, not on balance. While at times Novalis' intuitions, especially those found in his Lehrlinge, may be categorized with nature mystics, it should be done with the reservations this dissertation explores. In addition to his belief that the magician is the perfect artist, hence magical idealism, Novalis' writings on religion, which as do much of the writings of nature mystics include pantheistic tendencies, leave his spiritual intentions less than pure.

For the romantic, the poetical is intertwined with the idea of the ideal, which as Friedrich Schlegel notes in "Gespräch über die Poesie", "Jeder freie Geist sollte unmittelbar das Ideal ergreifen und sich der Harmonie hingeben, die er in seinem

Innern finden muß, sobald er sie da suchen will" (2, 306)[4]. At their best, in which the artist serves purely as medium, artists deliver divinely inspired directives. In the ideal world, there would only be poetical language. All poetry was part of a much larger more inclusive framework, so that each poem was in itself but a fragmented part of the whole. In the ongoing discussion of the relationship of art to nature (art reflecting nature, art perfecting nature,) idealized thinking hoped that by aestheticizing art, the world would be beautified. Wackenroder in Herzensergießungen or Tieck's tribute to Albrecht Dürer in Franz Sternbald attest to the energy invested in the memories of Renaissance painters. As the seminal words of Friedrich Schlegel read: "Die romantische Poesie ist eine progressive Universalpoesie" (2,182). It fuses poetry and prose, inspiration and criticism, the poetry of art and the poetry of nature to make poetry lively and sociable, and life and society poetical. In "Gespräch über die Poesie", F. Schlegel sees that chaos is the kernel from which the world of the old poetry. An imagined synthesis of all made possible by the romantization of all: "nach meinem Sprachgebrauch ist eben das romantisch, was uns einen sentimentalen Stoff in einer fantastischen Form darstellt" (F. Schlegel "Gespräch" 2, 333). And further:

> Was ist denn nun dieses Sentimentale? Das was uns anspricht, wo das Gefühl herrscht, und zwar nicht ein sinnliches, sondern das geistige. Die Quelle und Seele aller dieser Regungen ist die Liebe, und der Geist der Liebe muß in der romantischen Poesie überall unsichtbar sichtbar schweben; das soll jene Definition sagen. (2, 333-4)

[4]Schlegel, in his "Rede über die Mythologie", arrives at a similar language and concern as does Joseph Campbell that modern culture has no mythology. He presents mythology as one and the same with poetical language. To awaken in people their ability 'to see' [contrast to mystic 'to close the eyes'] is the romantic role of poetry and in doing so, construct a new mythology. See also F. Schlegel's essay on "Die Mystiker" vol. 12.

Schlegel here makes a considerable attempt to bring depth by distinguishing sensual from spiritual senses, yet his definition of spiritual is by no means mystical. As Novalis finds, only humans are able to fully enjoy nature with all our senses (1, 90) and the artist more fully hears, feels and sees outwards than inwards (2, 574). Mystical language often addresses the inner eye or the tasting of God's goodness. "The mystic is absolutely certain of God's presence and speaks about a particular type of spiritual sensation which knows, not just experiences. The Christian mystical tradition attests to a spiritual, or mystical, form of touching, hearing, tasting, smelling, and seeing God" (Egan xxiii) such as that on the fourth level of knowing beyond all. The relationship between the sensual, spiritual and mystical view of the senses is again a matter of the intensity of the depth of experience which shares a common language.

The intellect conjoins with sense-based terminology to form magical ideals which on some level reminisce back to the magical imagination of pre-operational thought. "Die Sprache," as Ludoviko teaches in "Ein Gespräch über Poesie," "die, ursprünglich gedacht, identische mit der Allegorie ist, das erste unmittelbare Werkzeug der Magie" (2, 348). The romantic term 'magic idealism' is problematic to reconcile as mystical since idealism as a concept goes against the mystic emphasis on the present. To see something ideally is to have one's subjectivity paint the reality at hand, and in a sense, to romanticize it. Ideal is something constructed from inflexible preconceived notions. E.T.A. Hoffmann's portrayal of Olimpia in Der Sandmann pays tribute not only to automation but also to the blinded perspective of those who see idealistically. In love with the ideal, Nathaniel is unable to see the reality. His projected ideals reflect back at him through the glassy windows of Olimpia's soul. To

see the ideal instead of the reality that is presents a stagnant impotent worldview inhibitory to experiencing the fullness of life. As Hellerich so succinctly puts it: "These subjective idealists stressed 'becoming' rather than 'being', the past and future rather than the intolerable present" (vi). Nothing could be further from the mystical revelation to 'be here—now'.[5] The following chapter suggests that romantic magical idealism depicted the Golden Age under the illusion of experience.[6]

Novalis' views on poets and poetry add to the difficulty of a mystical interpretation even of his most mature works though they have received interchangeable interpretation. Géza von Molnar, for example, provides a noble attempt to compare the stages of mystical union with Heinrich's passage to becoming a poet, stating

> the concept of poetization encompasses every aspect of life and is by no means restricted to literary productivity; on the contrary, as Novalis shows in his novel...the individual's evolution into a poet constitutes the apex of human accomplishment, *quite analogous to having reached the highest level on the ladder of mystical progress.* Consequently, Novalis views being human as equivalent to being a poet, just as Evelyn Underhill would claim the same synonymy with the addition of 'mystic' as a designation interchangeable with 'poet'. (emphasis added, 70)

Molnar's analogy, however, rests on Underhill's assertion that the mystic having reached the fifth level of perfect union must resort to symbolic language, as does Novalis with his odoriferous blue flower. I will at this point refrain from again stating the fallacies of this line of reasoning, though Novalis may be more inclined to agree

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[5]"Jetzt, das ist die Zeit, und hier ist der Raum" (Meister Eckhart "Fragmente" 23).

[6]Benz includes an interesting chapter on the what he finds to be influential aspects of Kabala on romantic thought in his book The Mystical Sources of Romantic Philosophy. He finds these especially relevant to the aspects of nature philosophy, perhaps because Oetinger and Schelling were the two main influences. While I certainly respect Benz's work, this is only one step of bringing mysticism and romanticism together; the resulting step is what is missing. Idealism appears as the problematic diffuser

with Molnar. For both the romantics and the mystics language remains inept; for the former to direct a yet unfulfilled wish while for the latter signifying what can only be experienced.

That the artist is transcendental (2, 534) falls into the stages of consciousness nicely (receiving inspiration from a higher source); yet Novalis' frequent alluding and philosophizing of the *effect* of his poetry has on readers underscores his priority. Poetry and nature bear semblance and in the following excerpt, Novalis confesses that nature is fragmentary:

> Erzählungen, ohne Zusammenhang, jedoch mit Association, wie *Träume*. Gedichte—blos *wohlklingend* und voll schöner Worte—aber auch ohne allen Sinn und Zusamenhang—höchstens einzelne Strofen verständlich—sie müssen, wie lauter Bruchstücke aus den verschiedenartigsten Dingen [seyn]. … Die Natur ist daher rein *poëtisch*. (3, 572)

Novalis further endows the poet with religious piousness; a man whose words glow with magical forces much like the miraculous aura of the clothes of deceased saints (2, 533). The following excerpt, also from a short collection of fragments entitled "Poesie", calls into question the artist Novalis' compatibility with mystical experience since he takes on the characteristics of a chameleon:

> Dieses Vermögen eine fremde Individualitaet wahrhaft in sich zu erwecken—nicht blos durch eine oberflächliche Nachahmung zu täuschen—ist noch gänzlich unbekannt—und beruht auf einer höchst wuderbaren *Penetration* und geistigen Mimik. Der Künstler macht sich zu allem, was er sieht und seyn will. (2, 535)

The artist as magician transforms his image to every whim or desire without transforming himself.

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of the terms Benz lists on page 10 which the romantics and mystics share.

Romantic poetry, as musical, is extolled above all artistic forms. The emphasis is on *becoming* this perfection, as it can never be completely fulfilled in this life.[7] For the romantics, texts likewise lack closure, so as to be given new meaning with every reading. All poetic forms should strive to be romantic in the sense formulated by Schlegel. To even begin to formulate the ideal, Schiller in his Aesthetic Letters realizes that first, the soul must be free. One sense of freedom is no longer having to comply with Classical restraint, but beyond these physical boundaries exists others since in exploring emotional and mental vistas one is still harnessed to energy of the ego. The free use of symbols, if I understand Wernaer's position correctly, reconciles the unreconcilable, another use of magical power over words to influence one's own reality. Freedom for the romantics was limited to the expanse of the mind.

Idealism casts the appearance of a halo over the term 'romanticizing' as Novalis' striking definition explicates:

> Indem ich dem Gemeinen einen hohen Sinn, dem Gewöhnlichen ein geheimnißvolles Ansehn, dem Bekannten die Würde des Unbekannten, dem Endlichen einen unendlichen Schein gebe so romantisire ich es—Umgekehrt ist die Operation für das Höhere, Unbekannte, Mystische, Unendliche—dies wird durch diese Verknüpfung logarythmisiert. (2, 545)

Magical idealism allows access to what is ordinarily thought of as impossible.[8] Included is the 'all is one and one is all' pantheistic idea demonstrating what could be

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[7] Though the general theory of romanticism is approximation of truth, I am somewhat hesitant to include such ideas as the difficulty of expression and approximation with Novalis simply as I do not sense this as one of his most important attributes. During a mystical experience, language is truly forgotten, and hence the retelling of the experience is only an approximation (Forman Problem 41). For Novalis writing is much more a celebration of language and thoughts, and hence a different type of difficulty.

[8] Kant had found it impossible that the mind and nature be put on par. However, through poetic voices all things seem ideal. The whole idea of an ideal nature is troublesome because nature is all but that. The ideal is set to one person's standards, and therefore does not exist but out of an individual's ego, i.e., can only be identified as an object. In this respect, nature is the creator's (poet) artwork (poem) much like a literal hermeneutic description of Hofmannsthal's words that the world is a poem could be taken to mean.

the first level of mystical awareness. The experience as but a constructed and logical thought process only hints at awakening. Life for the romantic Novalis was one of love and poetic thought, which Feilchenfeld asserts were the highest aspirations of the romantics: "In der Tat war den Romantikern der Prozeß des Denkens, des Schaffens selbst der höchste Zweck des Lebens" (37).

Idealism also leads to reflection, yet another factor to be overcome in moving beyond the preliminary stages of mystical awakening. The text as representation (the role of reflection and representation is germane to romantic theory) reflects a higher realm of experience than everyday consciousness. As would be expected as passionate resistance to the pursuit of perfection by reason dominating western life, the sensitive romantics focused on the glorification and exploration of the human senses. The prophetic artist, who exposes glimpses of the Infinite Reality, has traditionally been hailed as one who nurtures his creative spirit; one in touch with his self and who integrates his whole being to become a wholesome vehicle for manifestation of greater Truth. Goethe deifies the role of the artist in society: "Der Menschheit Würde ist in eure Hand gegeben, Bewahret sie!/ Sie sinkt mit euch! Mit euch wird sie sich heben!/ Der Dichtung heilige Magie/ Dienst einem weisen Weltenplane,/ Still lenke sie zum Ozeane/ Der großen Harmonie!" ("Die Künstler"). Human understanding is at the hands of the artist who, in connecting with the eternal of all times, appears to always be ahead of the others and looked up to in matters of the soul. The artist in this respect, takes on the role of a cultural teacher to guide the wandering and searching soul in its search for experiences of higher reality. The

romantics deserve due respect for their mission to connect with the soul in hopes of giving it flight.

Throughout his Reden über die Religion, Schleiermacher believed we could be one with God by feeling and that the feelings themselves were gifts of God to allow this attraction towards him. The soul gives the human body life, and as the spark of God, is the drawing force within leading back to God as its source. Soul was at the same time Spirit, a ground of being we share with all creation. The soul, as the romantics would agree with the highly regarded Flemish mystic Ruusbroec (1293-1381), was above reason and unlike the intellect, and as such drawn to an imageless appreciation of God. To connect with the soul, the romantics sought the sanctity of nature, which provided a very personal relationship with God. At various points in Novalis' philosophy the soul merges with forms of the 'I', but in essence, the soul is considered a sacred component of human physiology and better identified as formless interpenetrating spirit.

The romantic's heightened sensitivities emote over the beauties of nature as these connect with the individual soul. When in a state of being 'in love', as is characteristic of the romantics, the surrounding world assumes a radiant glow. Impassioned by the fervent promises of lasting bliss and infatuated by the infinite possibilities this sacred time with nature allowed, romantic poetry transgresses 'normal' limitations which intoxication by love admits. The Talmud saying introducing the last chapter is appropriate as romantics continue to live out their reality as personally experienced and reflected upon, not necessarily as it is. The romantic experience is by necessity an individual one, shielded from society by the protecting

forces of nature's vastness so that the seeker, in the likes of Wordsworth, may wander lonely as a cloud. Typically, the idyllic setting requires a pasture, a field, or a large lake: a quiet non-intrusive background to shelter the wandering mind of the poet seeking solitude to avoid interruptions to his imagination. The image of 'losing oneself in nature' alludes to the freedom one experiences given free reign from the confines, however much self-imposed, of living among civilization. The solitude of which a mystic such as Thomas Merton speaks, in contrast, is a state of mind which for those having mastered it, is "not something we generate under nice and favorable conditions. The conditions are unimportant".[9] Consistently, romantics describe nature in spiritual more so than actual physical or geographical terms. Following nature's invitation to reflection and recollection, the romantic spirit welcomed nature to exercise her spiritual effects almost invariably bestowed on those seeking transcendental insights.

It is of more than peripheral interest that the introduction to the fourth volume of Novalis' work comments that Hardenberg's geographical area, surrounded by the Harz mountains and the Thüring forest, was quite constrictive (4, 4). The beauty of evocative poetry appeals to the soul and sense of those on the universal search for wholeness and self-understanding. The artist *feels* truly free, having reached the height of his or her expectations in a creatively empowering ecstatic experience. A.W.

[9] Merton writes this in one of his letters included in Hidden Ground of Love. I dared include only a line as the depth from which he writes is lost when pulled in to associate with the complete contrast of motivation and understanding—and expectations—of solitude from the romantics. The paragraph in its entirety reads as follows: "There is not much point in longing for solitude. It is not something you get but something you have. It is you. What are you looking for? To see yourself as a happy object? It is a waste of time. Being solitary, I no longer give it a thought, because solitude is an illusion, like everything else. The only ground is emptiness, which is love. And this is not something we generate under nice and favorable conditions. The conditions are unimportant" (529).

Schlegel points out that in order to be free, something must be without intention or determination, as he claims in Theorie der Kunst that art work by definition of wanting to relate a message or experience cannot be a work of freedom. We invariably pursue freedom under various guises to reap benefits of commensurable levels of consciousness. Only when one addresses freedom from the self (subject of the fifth chapter)are the highest levels of consciousness and the ramifications of becoming a true free spirit evident.

David Granfield, writing on heightened consciousness, comments that "sadness...is beauty's child" (67). Substantial evidence accounts for the downright pathetic lives creative genius have endured, often to end their lives mad or simply end their lives. Passionately drawn to their art, artists often suffer imbalances. Granfield endorses the term melancholy as most appropriate to label a very prevalent component in the trilogy of nature, art and the artist. The great symphonies, especially the Beethoven or Brahms masterworks and the psychological novels of Dostoevsky or Shakespeare tragedies are heavy, serious and often confrontational as they tune to the "still, sad music of humanity" (Wordsworth "Lines Composed"). Particularly for the romantics, melancholy forms a precipice as unchecked melancholy hovers not far from serious depression. To consider the words of the romantic scholar, F.L. Lucas in The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal, he quite poignantly finds that the romantics were, and still are, content to remain in undisturbed sleep and to dream. Characterized by their love of the impossible, the romantics were doomed by their own lack of belief in the truth of reality at hand as they sought the infinite in the vastness ever to remain beyond reach. What was given them was insufficient; it was

there to be overcome. As the expressionist Trackl later remarked, Novalis drowned in his blue flower and continued life in sorrow.

Melancholic sensitivity, natural for artists and the mystic at this level, receptively concentrates on the creative force in an attitude not of sorrow but of restrained quiet, attentive and empty of discursive thoughts. The artist enlists this attitude for inspiration. This open attitude accepts unconditionally the seriousness of life and its immanent death. Beauty and death, two pivotal romantic guiding posts, fuse, since in accepting death life becomes more beautiful. The greatness and perfection of nature makes it easy to acknowledge our ignoble existence. Only to an extent, for the romantic, of course, finds pride in being able to experience this paucity so fully. The romantic heavily emphasizes the aesthetic beauty not only of the flower, for example, but also what Jacques Maritain sees as the much deeper 'transcendental beauty' (or Granfield 'universal').

Nature Mysticism

The eighteenth-century theologian Johann von Görres formulated a rather broad definition of nature mysticism in his two-volume work on Christliche Mystik. Görres laid the foundation of what he termed nature mysticism in the elements of nature (alchemy for example), and included such distinctions as black and white magic, where white was heavenly and black incorporated evil spells, with both considered mystical. Rolf Zimmermann relates that Görres' definition never endured

much beyond his time, and so the signification is still heavily based on religious affiliation.[10]

I was reassured to come to a similar conclusion as does Rolf Zimmermann in reaction to reading Wentzlaff-Eggebert's thorough review of mystical currents from the middle ages in Deutsche Mystik zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit that Böhme epitomizes the realm of nature mysticism, which agrees with significant American and English scholarship. Unfortunately, I find Wentzlaff-Eggebert's discussion of Novalis exemplary, though by no means without competition, of the strained attempt to 'mysticize' the romantic. In determining the *Sophienerlebnis* as pivotal experience to unleash his mystical nature, critics such as Wentzlaff-Eggebert and others argue that Novalis henceforth saw things differently. Interestingly enough, Zimmermann finds Wentzlaff-Eggebert's definition of mature mysticism much too narrow (including only Böhme) and provides an extensive listing of unfamiliar names Zimmermann believes should also be categorized as nature mystics. Zimmermann's argument points to nature mysticism as having to withstand a much more critical appreciation in Christian than German mysticism.

Characteristics of nature mysticism remain fairly consistent across the board, but the value placed on this type of experience various greatly, as has already been identified. In some instances, such as for Knowles in his book The Nature of Mysticism, supernatural mysticism counters that of the philosophical, or nature

[10] Silberer also recognizes Görres' contribution to demonic versus divine mysticism.

mysticism.[11] Rudolf Otto, in his familiar book Mysticism East and West distinguishes between mysticism of the spirit and nature mysticism (92), the latter being typified by a mystical feeling, i.e., the longing for unification or identification with an object or nature in general. I find little value to supporting a bipolar view of the more tangible nature oriented opposite the transcendental spirit. That one would develop through nature mysticism to higher levels of consciousness makes much greater psychological sense, and as Wilber demonstrates, allows for a more accurate comprehension than only two areas of mystical awareness, though these may have stages in themselves.

Numerous anthologies of Christian mystics present Böhme as prototypical representative of nature mysticism. Interestingly enough, though, it is on these grounds that others choose to overlook him.[12] Given that Novalis did not become aquatinted with the works of Böhme until a year before his early death, I do not find it necessary to expand on the specifics of Novalis' understanding of Böhme to more than a number of exemplary traits characteristic of nature mystics in general. The evidential influence is carefully portrayed in Feilchenfeld's extensive essay entitled "Der Einfluss Jacob Böhmes auf Novalis" (1922).[13]

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[11] Knowles entertains the idea of youth with nature mysticism, suggesting that perhaps Wordsworth had a point when he suggests being overcome with natural beauty to then be fueled with passionate longing is suggestive of adolescent behavior (128).

[12] There clearly exists an affinity of thoughts between Novalis and Plotinus, but it remains uncertain whether Novalis ever read Plotinus' work directly.

[13] Jacob Böhme's legacy (1575-1624) survives as the mystical village shoemaker from Silesia. Of Protestant upbringing, his teachings are linked to theosophy. As with many mystics, Böhme's writing was found heretical and blasphemous, leaving him no alternative to voluntary exile. Writings of the mystics share realizations coinciding with teachings outside of the Church and therefore deemed questionable to say the least. Böhme's treatises The Way to Christ and Aurora greatly influenced the romantic writers as so many common themes were addressed. The circle, as image of perfection, appealed to both Böhme and the romantics. Marshall Brown devotes a book to this topic in The Shape

Along with Böhme, Plotinus remains a singular influence on Novalis' thinking and consequent affinity with nature mysticism. Born in Egypt in 205, Plotinus is warmly referred to as the pagan mystic and rendered invaluable to the Christian tradition as he represents the Greek contribution to mystical thought. Christian mysticism finds its roots in Hellenistic culture, especially the concept of the soul. While the romantics give claim to his intense conception of nature, Bernard McGinn stresses that "[n]o other ancient author has portrayed the psychology of mystical states with their complex passages between the consciousness of duality and unity with greater subtlety than Plotinus" (Foundation 45). Germanist Hans-Joachim Mähl, however, issues a warning that although Novalis may well be known as the single most reverent adherent to Plotinus' work, much of the scholarship is open to skeptical scrutiny, especially since significant contributions have been deemed inaccurate.[14]

Familiarizing his readers with Plato's terminology, Wilber suggests that spirituality exists for the most part as either ascending or descending. Ascending spirituality, as the name implies, belongs to ascetic traditions which value the otherworldly and transcendental over this-worldly descenders.

> It [Descending spirituality] even identifies Spirit with the sensory world, with Gaia, with manifestation, and sees in every sunrise, every moonrise, all the Spirit a person could ever want. It is purely immanent and despises anything transcendental. (Brief History 11)

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of German Romanticism. Most probable that Novalis got the idea that the ideal is yet to be created from Böhme. A listing of Böhme works noted by Novalis is found in 4, 691.

[14] Mähl, Hans-Joachim. "Novalis und Plotin". Gerhard Schulz, Novalis (Darmstadt: Wissentschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1986). 357-423.

These two means of interpreting life remain either/or distinct entities. To continue Wilber's argument, the descenders (characteristics found in the romantics asserting themselves against the Classical period) eventually phases out to create a 'flatland: "the idea that the sensory and empirical and material world is the only one there is" (Brief History 11).[15] Akin to this spread out image is another phrase Wilber employs frequently: greater depth less span. The mystics are those who have been at the frontiers of the greatest depth, and not surprisingly, these numbers have been very few. Whereas modernity embraced the descended grid (great span and little depth), the mystic traditions stand out in that they balance and integrate the two directions. Mystics are those that have led the way in the evolution of the full human—the experience of non-dual union at the Christ-only or mind-only level of the Christians and Buddhists respectively.

I find another slight deviation in order when examining the term nature, or natural in mysticism, namely, that Rolf Knowles devotes a few thoughts to the term 'natural mysticism' which is the only form thereof I have found. Natural mysticism, Knowles explains, is "the institutional apprehension of unity, truth, beauty and love in the universe of being as it is presented to a human mind" (122). Knowles continues that as identical as these descriptions may appear with those having been graced by a direct experience of God, 'they are not identical, or of the same species... a distinction naturally denied by those to whom all mysticism is a purely psychological phenomenon" (123). One of the greatest insightful and truly beatific sections of literature is the closing of Goethe's Novelle, which integrates an artistic genius in full

[15] Flatland as related to consciousness, not class!

communion with nature. Opposite the rifle-carrying men who know only to kill, the young gypsy boy knows only to reach out to the animal on its level to overcome fear on both parties. The innocent harmony of the boy lying in the embrace of the tiger surely captures the essence of the biblical ideal of the lamb and the lion.

Stace makes the plausible, and for my intents supportive argument, that nature mysticism may fit into the seven characteristics he provides for extraverted mysticism (79), in that "it is a dim feeling or sense of a 'presence' in nature which does not amount to a developed mystical experience but is a kind of sensitivity to the mystical which many people have who are not in the full sense mystics" (80). He continues by citing famous lines from the romantic Wordsworth, whose love of nature is truly one of infused equality.[16] In the commentary by Stace though, the 'mystical appearance' of his poetry receive the following commentary:

> Plainly this expresses something essentially the same as what the extravertive mystics tell us they have experienced. But it is probable that Wordsworth never had such a definite experience as those which have been quoted in this section. It is possible to explain this poem without assuming that he had. Mystical ideas have passed from the mystics into the general stream of ideas in history and literature. Sensitive people can acquire them and feel sympathy with them, and can, in the presence of nature, feel in themselves the sort of feelings which Wordsworth here expresses. There are underground connections between the mystical and the aesthetic (whether in poetry or in other forms of art) which are at present obscure and unexplained. (81)

Wilber disputes the following in a chapter entitled "The Ego and the Eco": The eco (nature romanticism) camp seeks victory over the ego (rational Enlightenment)

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[16] From the "Lines Composed above Tinetern Abbey": A sense sublime/ Of something far more deeply interfused,/Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,/ And the round ocean and the living air,/ And the blue sky and in the mind of man;/ A motion and a spirit which impels/ All thinking things, all objects of all thought,/ And rolls through all things. This section of the poem is also cited by Inge, Christian Mysticism 310.

camp. In Wilber's scheme of things, the battle took place where it ultimately wanted to merge, on the flatland of humanity proving Plato's notion of descension by emoting with the ego serving as axis. The pendulum swing back to a nature oriented mind set ushers in a rebellious energy to counter that of the evolution of the dominating masculine ego and intellect subverting traditional feminine attributes such as intuition. Having been exulted above all, the ego had risen to a status no longer connected to human. The essential romantic belief that through unification with nature, the final goal, wholeness, could be attained was to deny any link to the rational ego. The *Naturphilosophie* of the romantics relayed that man and God were united through nature on a sensual level.[17] Since nature encompassed all, there was no need for a transcendental object of desire if God was the immanent Spirit-in-this-world. Moreover, God, if he could be seen as anything outside of nature, is the great artist of beauty and love, which make, incidentally, fine feminine attributes. Nature descended from the Ultimate, was infused with it (was the Ultimate by extension) so that everything was of this all-embracing reality. "Ja Mathilde, die höhere Welt ist uns näher, als wir gewöhnlich denken. Schon hier leben wir in ihr, und wir erblicken sie auf das innigste mit der irdischen Natur verwebt" (1, 289). Novalis' vision of heaven extends directly from a beautiful pasture here on earth. The romantics, and the ecophilosophers as Wilber maintains, follow a somewhat misread Spinoza, faming his belief that nothing exists outside of nature. Wilber criticizes the ecophilosophers for misrepresenting Spinoza's philosophy, explaining that his was indeed a genuinely well-represented comprehension of the interrelationship of God and nature. Spinoza

[17] Ecophilosophers glorify nature for the sensual, visual, and aesthetic pleasure it provides.

distinguished between nature, the plants and shrubs, with Nature, the Spirit which infused nature, making it Nature![18]

But the romantics, to continue Wilber's argument, further believed that society had deviated from nature's great scheme of things and were in turn ruining nature; distancing themselves from and making it a disassociated other (Brief History 286-7). Where there was once pervasive spirit, there now remained only memory and hope. The hermit in Heinrich von Ofterdingen shuns the nature of humans; "diese gewaltsamen, riesenmäßigen Zeiten, die heutige Natur!" (1, 261) and abiding in solitude describes his situation differently: "so komme ich mir selbst wie ein *Traum der Zukunft*, wie ein *Kind* des ewigen Friedens vor" (emphasis added 1, 261). Wilber therefore argues convincingly for the need of two natures when discussing the romantics: "Nature with a capital N that embraces everything, versus this nature that is different from culture because it is getting ruined by culture" (Brief History 287). As expected, the romantics were unable to uphold that distinction allowing the paradox that while they professed finding God in every leaf and rock, he was noticeably absent from the world. This latter perspective championed romantic disenchantment with the world at hand as they focused their attentions on glories of the other world. Copleston writes similarly stating that nature will be shown as the "immediate objective manifestation of the Absolute... [but the synthesis] must depict Nature as the expression and manifestation of Spirit (104). An argument for the romantic appreciation of beauty would run similarly. Beauty, for the romantics

[18] Wilber naturally finds the limit of Spinoza's philosophy at thought, which is how the latter believed the Ultimate Reality is approached, a view that stops short of the transrational level of the mystics. (Sex

primarily a sensual emotion for aesthetic enjoyment, is linked to spiritual anchorage so that no distinction is made between sensual and spiritual beauty (goodness, virtue and the like).[19]

Louis Dupré, in a slim volume entitled The Deeper Life based on a series of lectures and therefore not well documented, nevertheless provides an introduction to Christian mysticism not by presenting individual mystics, but by establishing important aspects considered mystical. One chapter discusses what Dupré finds, perhaps lamentingly, to be viewed as the current definition of mysticism:

> Before entering upon the discussion of this passive religious experience, we must pause to consider another more comprehensive definition of mysticism, current today, which is by no means restricted to the religious experience. According to that modern definition, *mysticism consists in an expansion of the conscious self beyond its ordinary boundaries to a point where it achieves a union with a 'greater' reality.* The experience is accompanied by a new feeling of integration, both with oneself and with that reality. Thus we speak of 'nature mysticism' when the self expands into such a union with its physical environment. (emphasis added, Deeper Life 20)

Dupré's research supports the idea that romantic thought has influenced popular understanding of mysticism, and reciprocally, that romantic thought has been influenced by mysticism. In Dupré's reading of the modern definition, it is clear how infused what most believe to be mysticism is the actual understanding of purely nature mysticism. Since 'greater reality' leaves a wide open interpretation, Dupré continues to differentiate what he understands to be religious versus non-religious experience, but concedes that it is often difficult to gain insight from first hand descriptions. The

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612). If we keep Wilber's reading of Spinoza, then Stace would also render a misreading of Spinoza in Christian Mysticism.

[19] Similarly voiced in Wernaer 28.

mystical experience in its fullness is not "a purely subjective, private experience" (Dupré Deeper Life 19) but from the onset, a communal depth reached when the Gospel was truly lived—that one had the mystical, the experiential, knowledge of God.

Die Lehrlinge

It is on grounds of Novalis' finding himself, God and the world through nature—and thereby gaining access to higher consciousness—that Dilthey, for example, attaches such devotional sentiment to writing about his hero. Novalis was easily fascinated with new theories and immediately put his thoughts to them; Fichte, Galvinism and the frog reflexes were quickly paralleled to human energies. What is found strewn throughout the aphorisms, and in the general theory of the novel, is the element of magic, which is as I interpret Dilthey to words, transformed Novalis's view of the world: "Der geistige Verkehr, die Liebe, die Religion—alles ward ihm zu einer Art von Zauberei" (182). Unfortunately, neither Novalis nor his predecessors distinguished magic from mysticism, as it was all to include something a little different than the ordinary. I often think that Novalis loathes having his work analyzed for consistency, meaning, originality or anything else because he writes for the effect. Writing in his Fragmente und Studien of 1799-1800 that "die Natur ist eine

versteinerte Zauberwelt" (3, 564), Novalis fails to convince me of even nature mystical tendencies, though it does remind me of wishful childish dreams.[20]

That nature plays an integral role in the individual's journey toward fulfillment dominates the fragment Die Lehrlinge zu Sais. Novalis addresses a theme still prevalent today: the spirit of mankind, exemplified by a single searching soul, is disassociated from its source and somewhat discombobulated longs to return to the simple *Naturstand*.[21] The journey is aided magnificently by the profound personal kinship with nature the apprentices to Sais develop. Language binds modern humanity to the past; the plot reveals travelers setting out with the intention of locating the 'Urvolk' whose history it is that they are still living. One striking feature is the relationship of thought to nature; through language as the poetic tool, our history has been constructed by observation of nature leading to a statement that history is somewhat a personality profile of nature! These acute observers include the scientists and the poets, who interestingly enough, use a common language with the presumed distinction that while scientists concern themselves with parts of nature, moreover, the inferior weak components, it belongs to the poets to praise the wholesome, wondrous totality of nature (1, 84). Novalis elevates the definition of understanding from the conventional rational oriented delineation to a higher dimension which encases that for him most noble of sentiments, longing: "Es ist schon viel gewonnen, wenn das Streben, die Natur vollständig zu begreifen, zur Sehnsucht sich veredelt, zur zarten,

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[20] Dilthey identifies the year 1799 as the "Blüte der Romantik" (183).

[21] Recall, though, that mystical teaching reminds us that this is what we perceive to be true while in actuality the source is always there. Novalis hints of this by means of suggesting when we have found the absolute, it is actually just a becoming aware of that which was already in us.

bescheidnen Sehnsucht" (1, 85). Certainly, the effeminate characteristic of *Sehnsucht* counters that of active striving.[22] The master is one who truly 'knows' nature, having perfected this art through careful observation, study and willingness to explore (1, 87 ff). The apprentices further learn that those doubting the perfection of nature tend to focus on the perils and ravaging deaths that are nature's handiwork.

The tale of Rosenblüte und Hyazinth as told in Die Lehrlinge commences with a paradisal, magical and anthropomorphic setting: "Die Ganz erzählte Märchen, der Bach klimperte eine Ballade dazwischen, ein großer dicker Stein machte lächerliche Bocksprünge, die Rose schlich sich freundlich hinter ihm herum" (1, 91-2). The intricate personification of natural elements and furthermore, the equanimity with which nature and humans are respected, much like the completely integrated world of fairy tales, often leads to difficulty in establishing if the subject is indeed a person. The images are tranquil and beautiful, making it a pleasure to read, as romantic, elusive poetry is at its best.[23]

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[22] As masculine/feminine distinctions are not a primary focus of interest, I would only like to mention two other situations that could further be seen in gender specific roles. Firstly that of history, a more male prototype rests on the observation of nature, certainly endowed with feminine qualities. Additionally the sentence found in Die Lehrlinge suggests that nature sees reason as the enemy (...des menschlichen Verstandes, den die Natur überall als ihren größten Feind zu vernichten suche) (1, 88). Hyazinth, we are told, "[sprach] natürlich kein vernünftiges Wort" (1, 91). If read in conjunction with the distinction mentioned above that reason propelled scientists are pictured opposite the emotionally driven poets, then we have yet another masculine and feminine dichotomy. The general consensus about scientists (*Naturforscher*) found in Die Lehrlinge leads one to question if Novalis squirms when he hears himself referred to as scientist. I find it much more accurate to keep him as philosophical poet, with marginal and speculative scientific interests. For that matter, a poet imbued with marginal mystical interests. It is also feasible to view mysticism as a feminine construct to balance (or oppose depending on the reading) the Orthodox Church.

[23] One example of 'romantic' language in mystical writing (the Song of Songs is perhaps the best known) is an excerpt from Tauler's sermons describing the ecstasy experienced in the first, which he calls the lowest, stage of mystical life. It reminds me again, of how we can view the romantics as being in the 'in love' phase—and never progressed beyond that: "reflecting on the wondrous tokens of love...the abundance of favors God has shown to us and to all His creatures; how all nature—verdant and blossoming—is filled with His glory; how he has flooded the whole of creation with His

Finally, the author of Die Lehrlinge appends that only lovers and poets can truly understand nature. The final sentiments are worth looking at more closely, since the teacher begins his last monologue with the words laying claim to the beautiful and holy profession to which the interpreters of nature have been called: "Ein Verkündiger der Natur zu sein, ist ein schönes und heiliges Amt" (1, 107). It takes discipline to remain true to the calling and practice from one's earliest years, to love solitude and practice simplicity in all things. Individuals begin at various times in their life and some at quite a ripe age. What is important, says the teacher, is for those who have taken on the calling towards artistic perfection to share their acquired knowledge with others. The teacher had this effect on his students after relating the fairy tale, leaving the euphoric students beside themselves to wonder if *der Mensch* would ever learn to join his independent voice with that of the one voice. As they recall, people opined in one voice in the golden days before man took after his own free will to try and understand that which he was not made to understand. They question if these deserters of the true path would eventually also learn the true art of feeling. "Diesen himmlischen, diesen natürlichsten aller Sinne kennt er noch wenig: durch das Gefühl würde die alte, ersehnte Zeit zurückkommen; das Element des Gefühls ist ein inneres Licht, was sich in schönern, kräftigern Farben bricht" (1, 96). The students conclude that feeling is the ultimate good; and that thinking (servitude only to rational intellect) is but a dream of feeling, and as that, a very poor indicator of actually living; "ein erstorbenes Fühlen, ein blaßgraues, schwaches Leben" (1, 96).

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unfathomable mercy... when we reflect on all this with profound love, a great and active joy will be born in us" (142). The object of the preacher's desires remains clear, but the language is strikingly nature-based. St. Francis' "Canticle of the Sun" is another beautiful poem celebrating God in nature.

An impassioned debate by erudite men about nature directly preceding the tale stimulates the young apprentice. Some members exhibit quite an air about them as they view themselves, connoisseurs of nature, above the ordinary: "Was brauchen wir die trübe Welt der sichtbaren Dinge mühsam zu durchwandern? Die reinere Welt liegt ja in uns, in diesem Quell [der Freiheit]" (1, 89). Self-assured, they must do nothing more than travel the path already made known to them. Another man, upon hearing this, seems to want to call attention to their egotistical outlook and wonders if they have yet to consider seeing nature as a representation of their own selves: "Sie selbst verzehren sich in wilder Gedankenlosigkeit. Sie wissen nicht, daß ihre Natur ein Gedankenspiel, eine wüste Phantasie ihres Traumes ist" (1, 90). Heedful that the impressions given by the preceding commentators is laden with the I, the man continues: "Er fühlt sich Herr der Welt, sein Ich schwegbt mächtig über diesem Abgrund, und wird in Ewigkeiten über diesm endlose Wechsel erhaben schweben" (1, 90). He concludes that a reasonable approach to finding one's self in nature is the most effective way to integrate our two ways of knowing.

Pantheism

Undoubtedly, a discussion of the invincible momentousness of nature cannot overlook that for Novalis, 'echter Naturalismus' is religion. As the poet writes, life will prove one of enjoyment for the pure lover of nature: "Sein Leben wird eine Fülle aller Genüsse, eine Kette der Wollust und seine Religion der eigentlich, echte

Naturalismus sein" 1, 106)[24]. As a 'Naturkomponist', Novalis exhibits characteristics of the ability of nature to transform consciousness as shared by Wilber:

> Dadurch gewinnen beide Wahrnehmungen: die Außenwelt wird durchsichtig, und die Innenwelt mannigfaltig und bedeutungsvoll, und so befindet sich der Mensch in einem innig lebendigen Zustande zwischen zwei Welten in der vollkommensten Freiheit und dem freudigsten Machtgefühl. Es ist natürlich, daß der Mensch diesen Zustand zu verewigen und ihn über die ganze Summe seiner Eindrücke zu verbreiten sucht; daß er nicht müde wird, diese Assoziationen beider Welten zu verfolgen, und ihren Gesetzen und ihren Sympathien und Antipathien nachzuspüren. (1, 97)

As the apprentice learns, not everyone is endowed with "einen richtigen und geübten Natursinn" (1, 105) yet much like the mystical sense, it can be developed and seems to be innate in each of us, coming to fruition at different levels and stages. F. Schlegel strikes accord with Novalis in maintaining that everyone carries within him the poet. "Fast jeder Mensch ist in geringen Grad schon Künstler" (2, 574) and Klingsohr emphasizes the natural tendency of humans toward poetry: "Es ist die eigentümliche Handlungsweise des menschlichen Geistes" (1, 287). Artists will attest that one must *learn to see*; in other words that artists must develop this capability. Sculptors confess that the work of art is already in the rough block of marble; the sculptor's art is to see it. Musicians likewise, develop in their art by learning to hear. Mystics express similar contentions, assuring us that we are already on the mystical path, albeit at different levels of consciousness and that it is, like any art, a path of discipline. Glimpses of mystical awareness can be gleaned from other levels, which is why one can speak of mystical elements in non-mystics. This coincides with the

[24] Although the intention comes out to be about the same, the wording for this section is interesting, as it is nature who picks out her son: "Glücklich preis' ich diesen Sohn, diesen Liebling der Natur..." (1, 106)

teaching of the Buddha that we enter the world at different levels of spiritual consciousness, and over lives, work towards Buddha consciousness.

It is difficult for many, myself included, to present Novalis in a straightforward manner; that is, as a man without paradoxes who remains true to himself in all things. His ability to be fascinated renders an appealing childlike quality to Novalis' personality. His musings on religion (explored in greater detail in the next chapter), at times reverent and composed such as essay on Christianity, at other times a rhapsodic fantasy with no basis. Much of Novalis' writing is ambiguous at best. Irving Babbitt's toast to F. Schlegel as a "genius for confusion" (86) applies equally, if not more so, to Novalis. Kittler produces his own theory that it is partly Novalis' vagueness and myriad interpretations, his conscious impreciseness in the fields of mathematics, philosophy or physics that comes from Novalis' overriding belief in the use of a common language, a term which his title Allgemeines Brouillion attests (Discourse Networks 72). Juxtaposing his notes to scientific readings, Novalis composed a fairy-tale type fusion of numerous elements. His aphorisms pose similar disjuncted thought fragments such as the following:

> Indem sich das Herz, abgezogen von allen einzelnen wircklichen Gegenständen—sich selbst empfindet, sich selbst zu einem idealischen Gegenstande macht, entsteht Religion.—Alle einzelne Neigungen vereinigen sich in Eine—deren wunderbares Object—ein höheres Wesen, eine Gottheit ist—daher ächte Gottesfurcht alle Empfindungen und Neigungen umfaßt. Dieser Naturgott ißt uns, gebiert uns, spricht mit uns, erzieht uns, beschläft uns, läßt von uns essen, von uns zeugen und gebären; Kurz ist der unendliche Stoff unsrer Thätigkeit, und unsrers Leidens.
> Machen wir unsre Geliebte zu einem solchen Gott, so ist dies *angewandte Religion.* (3, 570-71)

Subsequent fragments identify Catholicism as an applied Christian religion and Fichte's philosophy as applied Christianity. Another formulation equates the following: "Natur und Geist= Gott" (2, 548). The ambiguous assumptions continue into a discussion on pantheism.

Experiences of nature mysticism are often described in pantheistic terms. In a generally positive sense, pantheism sees God in all things equally, but the more difficult to reconcile with traditional belief is that all things are God. The following examples illustrate pantheistic belief:

Gospel of Thomas: "Lift up a stone and you will find me there." (Dart 22)

Novalis: "Wenn Gott Mensch werden konnte, kann er auch Stein, Pflanze, Thier und Element werden, und vielleicht giebt es auf diese Art eine fortwährende Erlösung in der Natur" (3, 664)

For the pantheist, God is identical with the world, and the world with God. Novalis maintains that nature is the sole entity with which man can compare himself (1, 99), because, we could conclude, nature is divine. Heinrich Heine, in setting pantheism against deism, actually sees the former as a mature religion for those having outgrown traditional Christian teaching of a father-like God-figure.[25] Likewise, Kant's theory of immanism strikes similar chords with pantheistic beliefs. Historically, pantheism as a religion has found disfavor and been grounds for dismissal and heresy in the established church and was formally condemned by Pius IX in 1861. One well-grounded objection is that pantheism as the only religion, (to set apart from such

[25] Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland 57 ff. Manfred Windfuhr, ed., Heine Sämtliche Werke 8/1 (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1979). Pantheism was strongest in Germany until the eighteenth century.

'pantheistic tendencies' such as found in Eckhart) abandons ritual and other necessary established practices to facilitate the "transformation of character which is the necessary prerequisite of a total, complete and spiritually fruitful transformation of consciousness" (Huxley 23). Pantheists practice equanimity to the extent that God is no greater than the leaf which reflects the sun in the morning dew. Needless, therefore, is the theological basis that God is transcendent. Shamanists are pantheistic in this regard in that they take on naturally created forms. In Spiritual Espousals, Ruusbroec writes that "God has thus seen and known them in himself—as distinct in his living ideas and as different from himself, though not different in every respect, for all that is in God is God" (149). A cursory reading may elicit the conclusion that God and the world are the same, yielding a most unfortunate misrepresentation of a sensitive relationship. Believing that all things arise out of a common center (God), Tauler reasons that all is in God and for this reason is God being born eternal. The pantheistic tendency in Christian mysticism is more accurately panentheism.

The more favorable view of panentheism accepts a principle of polarity where God is both immanent and transcendent. I include one of Novalis' entries on basis of his word choice without attempting to place him as pantheist or panentheist: "Die transscendente Natur ist zugleich immanent—so auch die immanente Person ist transscendent zugleich—und auch umgekehrt" (2, 157). While the teachings of pantheism and panentheism share many common elements with that of the theosophical view, an important distinction, at least for the theosophists, is that the former emphasizes the many (pan), or distributes God through all, whereas the theosophists view the world as one. Wehr, however, submits that theosophical

philosophy grew out of pantheism, a claim suggesting that the finer distinguishing factors between the two world views may really only be one of particular emphasis on a certain aspect of the same thing.

The mythical character Astralis commences the second part to Heinrich von Ofterdingen by unearthing that a new world has come upon us which makes one see things differently, to say this most pantheistically:

> Eins in allem und alles im Einen/ Gottes Bild auf Kräutern und Steinen
> Gottes Geist in Menschen und Tieren,/ Dies muß man sich zu Gemüte führen.
> Keine Ordnung mehr nach Raum und Zeit/ Hier Zukunft in der Vergangenheit.
> (1, 318)[26]

Viewed through the Novalis' magical eyes of romantic idealism, this passage, as in the entire monologue, takes on an intensely fantastical appearance. As for so many artists, nature provided Novalis the grounds for the closest experience of the Infinite Reality while still living on earth. Not only does God reveal his goodness in nature, he is in nature and, moreover, is nature. If God is nature, so is Sophie, as a letter to his brother Erasmus in the fall of 1795 confides (4, 155). States Novalis: "indem ich Pantheism nicht im gewöhnlichen Sinn nehme—sondern darunter die Idee verstehe—daß alles Organ der Gottheit—Mittler seyn könne, indem ich es dazu erhebe—(2, 442-4) and that "nur panthëistisch erscheint Gott *ganz*—und nur im Panthëismus ist Gott *ganz* überall, in jedem Einzelnen" (3, 314). The medieval mystics similarly ascribed to a divine presence in all things, but for Novalis the fact that God was not only in nature but nature itself eliminated spared him the need to identify God as anything beyond nature.

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[26] That all is one and one is all similarly worded by F. Schlegel to begin his Traszendentalphilosophie of 1800 (12, 7).

Novalis' appropriates the Catholic mystery of the Trinity by renaming and philosophizing about it over a number of pages:

Gott	
Natur	
Person	
Ich	Natur
Natur	Ich
Ich	Natur (2, 155)

Another version appears as:	Gott-Natur-Ich.
	Synth[ese]. Gott ist Ich schlechthin.
	Antithes[e]. Natur. Synthetisches Ich in den Formen der Anschauung (2, 143)
And yet another:	Die Natur muß über Gott zur Person steigen.
	Die Person üb[er] d[ie] Natur zu Gott. (2, 157).

Analogous to the interdependent working of the trinity, the three elements of nature, God and person, distinct yet the same, function together to create the romantic. The relationship between mysticism and religion adds confusion as to what defines romantic religion, 'irreligion', both for Novalis' use and then for the critics. On one hand, irreligion could be seen as a synonym for mysticism, as this approach has been touted as opposing institutional religion. Yet perhaps irrelgion designates the romantic adaptation of mysticism, the neoteric approach to seasoned material the young romantics longed to renew. Novalis romanticized his understanding of Catholicism to conform to his own romantic religion, the true religion. Symbolic Catholic images held a particular fascination. The virgin mother Maria proved an opportune icon in poetic praise of women under the guise of Christian piety. In his essay Christenheit oder Europa, at first immediately rejected by his peers, Novalis poetically depicts what he finds relevant as he spends his time (early 1799) studying the Middle Ages.

Particularly appealing to the poet is that in the past, a common religion unified Europe. That Novalis refrains from including mention of religious wars not to mention other turmoil renders this essay as additional support for regressive tendencies based on idealized romantic fallacies more fully covered in the next chapter. More importantly, neither Catholicism nor any Protestantism variation typifies Novalis' choice for a unifying religion at the present time, as only his own concoction of romantic irreligion would restore the glory of more wholesome times. Die Christenheit oder Europa exudes what Cupitt identifies as purely romantic (though with no specific reference to romanticism); a "soaring, cosmic religious feeling" (140) which is almost ironic to the subject at hand. Perhaps the best take on religion and Novalis is an amalgam of religious traditions, from orthodox to pietistic to pantheistic, to create his own religion based above all on sentiment moving toward a moral and ethical ideal. Novalis, after all, felt confident enough to write that "Spinotza stieg bis zur Natur—Fichte bis zum Ich, oder der Person. Ich bis zur These Gott" (2, 157). For Novalis, the more poetic religious appearance, the closer it was to the truth, resounding harmoniously with F. Schlegel's belief that the reality, which is found in ideas, expresses itself symbolically. Finally, Novalis' religion is one of art and artists: "Alle absolute Empfindung ist religiös./ Religion des Schönen. Künstlerreligion." (2, 395).[27]

Pantheistic tendencies can again be interpreted on different levels, and given the intense poetical nature of Novalis work, I find Georg Lukács' choice of the term

[27] More on religion in Blütenstaub fragment # 74 (2, 175-6).

'Panpoetismus' enlightening. Panpoetismus: the glorification of words with the their poet as creator. Writes Lukács about Novalis:

> Die Weltanschauung der Romantik ist der echteste Panpoetismus: alles ist Poesie und die Poesie ist das 'Eins und Alles'. Nie und für niemand war je das Wort 'Dichter' so vielbedeutend, heilig und allesumfassend, wie für die Romantik (Schulz 27).

Lukács further draws on the egotistical nature of the Romantics which facilitates this functional choice of the term Panpoetismus: "Der Mensch... ist dieses Ziel: sie sprachen—mit Fichtes Worten—vom 'Ich'. In diesem Sinn waren sie Egoisten: Fanatiker und Diener der eigenen Entwicklung, denen alles nur insofern lieb und wertvoll war, als es ihr Wachstum förderte" (28). Entrusted with the kernels of true "ich-potential", poets are the chosen few. Poetic words carry the soul forth. Novalis felt himself worthy of God's graces having endowed him with this important gift and longed for eternity through his poetry. Similarly, Suzanne Nalbantian describes the position of the poet in reference to ancient Greece in The Symbol of the Soul from Hölderlin to Yeats; nature is the temple, the poet is the priest who mediates between the people and the Great spirit (26). In Novalis' all-inclusive language, the person and nature are interchangeable for the temple image, more specifically, the romantically evolved person whose body is a temple.[28] The triune image of poet, priest and temple also expresses the relationship of the poet as transliterating the sounds of nature as he alone deciphers for the uninitiated.

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[28] "Es giebt nur Einen Temple in der Welt und das ist der menschliche Körper" (3, 565). The affinity in spirit shared by poets (as artists of the word), and priests (as teachers of the Word), Novalis notes in the following aphorism: "Dichter und Priester waren im Anfang Eins, und nur spätere Zeiten haben sie getrennt. Der ächte Dichter ist aber immer Priester, so wie der ächte Priester immer Dichter geblieben. Und sollte nicht die Zukunft den alten Zustand der Dinge wieder herbeyführen?" (2, 441). Also: "Ein vollkommener Repräsentant des Genius der Menschheit dürfte leicht der ächte Priester und der

Inge in his work Christian Mysticism finds it somewhat bemusing that the nature mystics have such a great love for God and their own souls by way of nature, but such difficulty sharing their love with others (316). The concern for social well-being is at the apex of the mystical journey when the other, no matter what, is no longer other but Christ and therefore of one's own flesh and blood. The true test of the mystical process is that one's own needs take no precedence to those of others as there is no longer a distinction. At that point, the soul has undergone its transformation to have outgrown the body it was given and no longer feels attached to it. At the romantic stage, however, religion is beauty. "Relig[ions] Lehre. Sonderbar, daß in so viel Religionen die Götter Liebhaber des Häßlichen zu seyn scheinen (3, 262). Novalis's remarkable statement undermines true mystical understanding; where Novalis's aesthetic religion could not account for unpleasing blemishes, Christian charity summons to see the beauty in all.

The close affinities linking the artist and the mystic are found most prevalent and striking in their shared divination of nature. The important distinction must be drawn, however, if one remains fixed to that which is manifest or if that which is manifest draws attention to the original source. Griffiths clarifies similarly that one can either see the world transformed in a mystical experience, or one is oneself transformed. Surely the ability to experience a oneness with any form of nature is the first level of union, and is in no manner limited to a religious setting. The romantic finds fulfillment in the bliss of the moment, whether there are fruitful repercussions

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Dichter…sein" (2, 447). Perhaps Novalis likens these two artistries because the seat of the soul governs them; the seat of the soul being where the inner touches the outer world (2, 419).

later or not. If the romantic emphasizes flowers, the mystic knows only the fruit substantiates.[29]

I chose Thomas Merton's words that the artist seeks to create while the mystic seeks to be created to introduce this dissertation because they so eloquently illustrate and penetrate the affinity of artists and mystics on one level, which also proves their departure point. Artists possess the extra sense of belonging to nature, which he or she translates in the artistic medium. As Robert Ornstein explains in The Evolution of Consciousness, artists, at the level of consciousness of the nature mystic, know that our conscious self monitors the actions our unconscious realms devise up. Human creativity, therefore, often "comes forth without the conscious intervention of the artist" (Ornstein 147). Novalis was aware of this, noting that words transform into poetry when poets capitulate to their control center. Ordinary consciousness remains ignorant of the subtle process underlying that on which we consciously focus. The glorified notion of artist as savior, as one who by his work unifies the senses with a greater glory which slowly but convincingly led to a broadening and centering of the I-domain,

> the subjective domain, the domain of art and artistic vision and intense self-expression. Not just Truth, not just goodness, but above all Beauty, would finally disclose the Divine. And these great aesthetic-expressive movements began in earnest with the Romantics of the late eighteenth century. (Wilber Marriage 89)

Nature proved an apt medium in the individual search for oneness with the inner self which theoretically was to lead to God, but more precisely, gave a more detailed topography of the romantics inner nature. Nature mysticism typified by the

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[29] Fruit of contemplation: life characterized by "that peace which surpasses all understanding" (Ph 4:7).

expression of a mystical feeling of intuitive quiet contemplation : "... the sense of being immersed in the oneness of nature, so that man feels all the individuality, all the peculiarity of natural things in himself" (Otto Mysticism 93). Paradoxically, looking inward allowed a vast expanse of experience to flourish within the self—the great expansive mysticism turned inward. "Wir werden die Welt verstehn, wenn wir uns selbst verstehn, weil wir und sie integrante *Hälften* sind. Gotteskinder, göttliche Keime sind wir. Einst werden wir seyn, was unser Vater ist" (2, 548). The romantics saw the unity of all things, the goodness of all, but not to the depths of Plotinus to find that "the One is all things and no one of them" (Enneads 5.2.1, 436). Rather they adopted a theorem posited by Schlegel, one of their own: all is one and one is all. Contrary to what is often deemed true by inference, levels of union are not a manipulation of two or more random things, but rather an integration of a lower into higher being. As finite beings we are part of the infinite, not its other. A variation on this is found in the Ruland's definition of alchemy, to which the early mystics and the romantics as well, turned for alchemical correlatives: "Alchemy is the separation of the impure from the purer substance" (Silberer 169).[30] As is the ideal of marriage, two total beings merge to constitute a third entity, rather than two parts to produce a whole. This is one of the greatest mystical teachings, and as Plotinus writes in his Enneads, "the opposites coincide without ceasing to be what they are in themselves" (8.1). Egan points out that the influence of a definition of mysticism such as provided by the English philosopher Walter Stace is enormous but pernicious. I quote Egan:

[30] A similarly important image from alchemy is fire. It is the cleansing, or purifying, element through which metals must pass. A current book on Sufism bears the title Love is a Fire and I am Wood.

> Writes Stace: 'The core of the [mystical] experience is thus an undifferentiated unity—a oneness or unity in which there is no internal division, no multiplicity'. Undifferentiated unity signifies that the mystic experiences a total fusion with or dissolution into the Absolute. The mystic experiences no difference at all between himself and the Absolute and claims to be this Absolute.This view rules out the possibility of an authentic Christian mysticism, a love mysticism of differentiated unity in which two become one, yet remain two. (15)[31]

Profundity of images of spiritual marriage abound because it is symbolic of union. Wilber offers numerous examples of the different levels of union which are not to be confused as they arrive from various depths of consciousness. The human condition suffers from separation, not distinction, since the latter discourages union. Something which is separated actually belongs together, is of similar matter, versus that which is distinct may have nothing in common to unite. However the union is experienced, it may well be labeled as a mystical experience, an experience in terms of consciousness which brings awareness of something greater than ordinary-waking consciousness. Yet what these psychic levels have in common, states Wilber, is

> that the mystical experience moves beyond ordinary or conventional reality (the gross/waking realm), but still takes as *part of its referent* the gross/waking realm. Thus, no matter how extraordinary or 'far-out', all mystical experiences of the psychic level are still *related* to gross/waking reality—the experience still refers, in whole or part, to elements in the gross/waking realm. (Sex 607-8)

Wilber adds in his journal One Taste:

> ...it is not permanent, and it does not involve the higher subtle or causal reams-in other words, it is a classic case of nature mysticism. This is the highest type of mysticism generally recognized by deep ecologists, ecopsychologists, neopagens, ecofeminists, Gaiasophists, and Great Mother worshippers,

[31] I agree that the citation found by Egan is unfortunate, but it is appropriate as it demonstrates conventional thinking about mysticism. Stace clarifies in his preface to Mysticism and Philosophy that he writes as a philosopher, and not as a mystic. Furthermore, Stace reminds us that mystics do not argue, having rather "inner subjectivity [which] raises a new and puzzling problem for the poor philosopher" (7). For the countless initial doubts Stace shares with his readers, the book provides an honest approach to mysticism and a valuable asset to mystical theory.

> although it is the lowest of the mystical spheres, that of the Wold Soul or Eco-Noetic Self. Nonetheless, it is a profound and powerful dimension of consciousness, one glimpse of which can alter a life irrevocably. The tone of experience at the psychic level (of nature mysticism) is almost always one of complete reverence; a sense of the awesomeness of existence; and a sense of the insignificance of humans in general and me in particular. (156)

The supporting elements for Novalis as mystic usually run along these lines. The last condition, that there is a sense of insignificance falls true to the experience as it is happening, but it has not yet infused to a true mystical degree of moving beyond the experience itself. In nature mystical situations, the poet empathizes completely with the emotions of others and things unconditionally, to find him or herself inseparable from what was previously an object or other. A momentary transcendental experience in nature finds eternity in a poem. As lovers of beauty, the passionate poet glorifies the carefree ways of an intoxicated blissful moment, floating with the suspension of time; a moment lifted from the realms of imposed temporality. As related in Wernaer, Herder's elation of freedom resonates in the following words which echo Wilber's motto for the nature mystic as 'becoming the sunset': "I rustle with the wind and become alive—give life—inspire... I dissolve in water; I float in the blue sky", yet as Wernaer comments to this citation, Herder "[floats] in the heavens and [dissolves] in the water for the pure enjoyment of it all" (168). While a pleasurable feeling may most certainly accompany a euphoric experience, the mystic knows one can not be attached to this feeling if it is to prove beneficial in the spiritual journey. However noteworthy, awesomely inspiring and grateful one may be for an illuminating experience, those on the mystical path must know that even this gift must be forsaken to travel further down the path.

Wernaer accentuates many of what I find to be the pertinent characteristics of the period, and reveals in his chapter on "Romanticism and Nature" that because the romantics see themselves defined by nature, it is nature, ironically, which hinders the poet from entering a fuller mystical understanding:

> There was, however, a limit to their soul intercourse, a limit drawn by the shortcomings of human nature, which the romanticists, in particular Novalis, were not willing to acknowledge. It is expressed in Tennyson's words already quoted:
>
> "Little Flower—if I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is."
>
> If I *could* understand—but—I cannot. It is not given to man to know the whole of God. Indeed the poet can penetrate into nature's mysteries long after the scientist has laid aside his tools; but there comes a time when *he* also must take leave of nature. If he does *not*, he ceases to be a poet and becomes a theosophist and a mystic. (183)

Unfortunately the author does not expound on this idea in a detailed manner, but points out that the poet cannot understand, cannot know God to the fullest extent if he remains in any way attached to the sentiment of nature or beauty. There comes a time when in order to enter a deeper level, the very nature by which one has found redeeming solace and pleasure must be denounced.

Speaking of a cloud of forgetting between them and all creatures, mystics allude to the void which follows departure from sense related activity. A rather stark contrast to those known for their nature mysticism are for example, the lives of the *Desert Abbas* and *Ammas*. Undisturbed solitary time spent in nature quite naturally induces an exhilarated affection of oneness with Spirit, or to the object of the Indian prayer—the Great Spirit whose voice is heard in the wind. However, the same medium can, at a very different level, prove a distraction along the spiritual path since

it is taught that no mediators are found at the deepest level of commune. Seeking to minimize distractions, the desert father, St. Anthony the Great being one of the best known hermits, sought refuge in the Egyptian desert, living strict solitary lives to facilitate a deeper interior reservoir of silence. Their collection of writings, entitled the Apothegmata, addresses themes such as anger, charity, simplicity temptations and the greatest contemplative gift of interior silence. The apaphatic Tauler states:

> Whoever wishes to find God in truth must seek Him there and nowhere else. Whoever arrives here has discovered what he has been searching for far and wide. His spirit will be led into a hidden desert far beyond his natural faculties. Words cannot describe it, for it is the unfathomable darkness where the divine Goodness reigns above all distinctions. And the soul is led further, into the oneness of God's simple unity, so that it loses the ability to draw any distinctions between the object and its emotions. For in this unity all multiplicity is lost; it is the unity which unifies multiplicity. (59)

Poverty moves beyond tangible and intangible ownership to refer to the ability to let go of attachment to them. Renouncing his family, Jesus states rather directly: "Who are my mother and my brothers? We are all united, all equal, and none gets more favor as being my family than others" (Mark 3: 31-35). Detachment of self preempts mystical union with God.[32] At the level of romantic illumination, the distinctive aesthetic component coincides with expectations to produce pleasure. For the transformed mystic, a condemned and unkempt beggar bears God's beauty because all are seen as equal manifestations of God. Whereas aesthetically inspired illuminations absorb our spirit temporarily; a transformed spirit no longer judges

[32] Molnar provides an example of 'mystical' reading. He interprets the phrase 'liebliche Armut' (1, 203) from Heinrich von Ofterdingen as a term designating the poverty of "selflessness [which] must prevail, a condition that is free from want and free from self-indulgence" (127).

aesthetically, for them, everything is beauty, everything that lives is holy. And this is found by traversing the blossoming fields, leaving them and entering the desert.

"Die Natur hat Kunstinstinkt" writes Novalis, "daher ist es Geschwätz, wenn man Natur und Kunst unterscheiden will" (3, 650). As creative artist, Novalis exudes elements of the following description of a nature mystic as Weeks and others have extolled him, particularly in his definition of pantheism as all of God's creation acting as mediating elements which bind us to God. Similarly to the words of Underhill given to introduce the relationship at the beginning of the chapter, Rolf C. Zimmermann, in his introduction to a book on nature mysticism, offers some apt sentiments of warning before endowing mystical traces as indeed mystical:

> Zur Mystik kommt es zweifellos noch nicht, wenn Menschen fromme Gefühle von höchster Intensität haben. Zur Mystik kommt es ebenfalls noch nicht, wenn ein philosophisches Denken sich mit den Begriffen Gott, Mensch und Welt befaßt. ...Ebenso wenig können Leibniz oder Spinoza Mystiker genannt werden, obwohl ihre Spekulation sie dem Pantheismus und anderen Lieblingsgedanken der Mystik nahebrachte. (13)

Aldous Huxley, in his seminal book The Perennial Philosophy, minces no words when it comes to poets who often get 'overrated' in that one experience has truly changed their lives; they have gained access to experience the oneness of all, but "made no efforts to perceive it within themselves" (68). Huxley continues that this gift (of experience) "is prized for the ecstatic pleasure it brings; its coming is remembered nostalgically and, if the recipient happens to be a poet, written about with eloquence..."(68). Huxley finds it ludicrous to compare the stanzas of a Byron, Wordsworth or Haydon with those words of, to use his own example, St. Bernard, and draw a similar interpretation of each. Though both speak of nature as their teacher, the

experiences attained thereby apexed on differing levels. "Wordsworth", writes Huxley, "like almost all other literary Nature-worshippers, preaches the enjoyment of creatures rather than their use for the attainment of spiritual ends—a use which, as we shall see, entails much self-discipline for the user" (69). Although this statement is actually also somewhat misleading, since I argue that the mystic often writes with no ulterior motivation (i.e., attainment of spiritual ends), Huxley's insight accentuates the need for discipline on the side other than literary nature-worshippers.

Irving Babbitt, another somewhat dated yet respected source, similarly sees the romantics as worshipping nature as its own end, suggesting that salvation is found in fulfilling one's [self proclaimed] duty to commune with nature (Rousseau and the Romantics 222). Babbitt finds the nature cult invents a "series of extraordinarily subtle disguises for egoism" which put emphasis on wonderful human qualities, but not on human growth (234-5). Babbitt states: " I cannot repeat too often that I have no quarrel with the nature cult when it remains recreative but only when it sets up as a substitute for philosophy and religion" (234). The European romantic authors following Rousseau's call of return to nature, were, in Babbitt's terms, committed to counts of transcendental idling.

At the risk of sounding like a cliché, it fits appropriately that all roads lead back to the self in the romantic condition. Where for true nature mystics, the Infinite (not infinite) is the source of art and creative potential, the source for the romantics centers at the level of self, or the ego though language used may imply other motives. As Rosen sees it, "infinite was a medium in which the imagination could allow for the free expansion of associations, dreams, music" (49). For the romantics, nature

allowed a sense-filled opportunity for oneness. Inflating the image of the artist to an unfounded grandeur, the romantics sought to reach new transcendent heights. One must not look for anything beyond nature. In her, we find God, Spirit, our lover and our self.

Nature played a pertinent role in vivifying the complete cycle of what he sees as the begin in divine union at birth, development of the human by definition leads one away from this union until one consciously returns back to it. The pivotal point is that of the Centaur, which Wilber admits is the highest consciousness that conventional researchers readily acknowledge. 'Man as Centaur' is already present in Wilber's Spectrum of Consciousness, and is the integration of mind and body in the person to create, in fact, the autonomous self. Wilber additionally sees this stage as the existential stage, one which questions the limitations of the prior ones but unfortunately, and hence the name, "recognize[s] no sphere of consciousness higher than this" (Brief History 194).

Wilber finds that the Romantics anchor their inward striving to the failure of Kant to successfully integrate what Wilber calls the Big Three—art, morals and science. Yet the romantics zoned in on the complete veneration of art beginning "an intense effort to make the I-domain, the subjective domain- and especially the domain of aesthetics, sentiment, emotion, heroic self-expression, and feeling- the royal road to Spirit and the Absolute" (Marriage 90). It is tempting to endow Novalis at this time to confirm that Novalis' intuitive and artistic affinity with nature mysticism should suffice to warrant his reign. Yet two major themes related to union are still to be observed; that of his magical belief that our origin was the union we must once again

attain and that this reality is the creative potential of the artist to create in, and by, himself.

CHAPTER 4
LONGING FOR HOME: THE ROMANTIC CONDITION

Sehnsucht nach dem Tode

Hinunter in der Erde Schoß,
Weg aus des Lichtes Reichen,
Der Schmerzen Wut und wider Stoß
Ist froher Abfahrt Zeichen.
Wir kommen in dem engen Kahn
Geschwind am Himmelsufer an.

Gelobt sei uns die ewige Nacht,
Gelobt der ewge Schlummer.
Wohl hat der Tag uns warm gemacht,
Und welk der lange Kummer.
Die Lust der Fremde ging uns aus,
Zum Vater wollen wir nach Haus.

Was sollen wir auf dieser Welt
Mit unsrer Lieb' und Treue.
Das Alte wird hitangestellt,
Was soll uns dann das Neue.
O! einsam steht und tiefbetrübt,
Wer heiß und fromm die Vorzeit liebt.

Die Vorzeit, wo die Sinne licht
In hohen Flammen brannten,
Des Vaters Hand und Angesicht
Die Menschen noch erkannten.
Und hohen Sinns, eingältiglich
Noch mancher seinem Urbild glich.

Die Vorzeit, wo noch blütenreich
Uralte Stämme prangten,
Und Kinder für das Himmelreich
Nach Qual und Tod verlangten.
Und wenn auch Lust und Leben sprach,
Doch manches Herz für Liebe brach.

Die Vorzeit, wo in Jugendglut
Gott selbst sich kundgegeben
Und frühem tod in Liebesmut
Geweiht sein süßes Leben.
Und Angst und Schmerz nicht von sich trieb,
Damit er uns nur teuer blieb.

Mit banger Sehnsucht sehn wir sie
In dunkle Nacht gehüllet,
In dieser Zeitlichkeit wird nie
Der heiße Durst gestillet.
Wir müssen nach der heimat gehn,
Um diese heilige Zeit zu sehn.

Was hält noch unsre Rückkehr auf,
Die Liebsten ruhn schon lange.
Ihr Grab schließt unsern Lebenslauf,
Nun wird uns weh und bange.
Zu suchen haben wir nichts mehr—
Das Herz ist satt—die Welt ist leer.

Unendlich und geheimnisvoll
Durchströmt uns süßer Schauer—
Mir däucht, aus tiefen Fernen scholl
Ein Echo unsrer Trauer.
Die Lieben senen sich wohl auch
Und sandten uns der Sehnsucht Hauch.

Hinunter zu der süßen Braut,
Zu Jesus, dem Geliebten—
Getröst, die Abenddämmrung graut
Den Liebenden, Betrübten.
Ein Traum bricht unsre Banden los
Und senkt uns in des Vaters Schoß.

In the mystical as in the romantic journey, the inward way has as its utmost goal the attainment of union. The path towards union, characterized as returning home, finds diverse depictions of various facets in literature to demonstrate various ideas of what union entails. This chapter dwells on the metaphors of paradise, in all manners of its appearance in Novalis' work; the Golden age, heaven and hell, and Eden versus the eternal city. As shown by a discussion of the novel Heinrich von Ofterdingen, the romantics anchored their aspirations in the paradise as had been and hoped to attain again. Throughout the chapter the mystical versus the romantic understanding of the symbolic home is brought to discussion. The romantic way heads home by addition, by building towards transcendental heights while the mystical journey home is one of unloading and excavation of hindrances to seeing that we have never left home. Included therewith is a discussion on the regressive factor dominating romantic thought, regressive in that however paradise as home is presented, it entails a regressive motion back toward nature, back towards childhood; back to union of the acorn.

Interpretations of Novalis' Golden Age span the gamut from it being a completely newly imagined ideal city in the future to a complete regression back to the mother's womb, as a transition to then return to the simple perfection and harmony governing the garden of Eden. On one hand, it is something *other,* as Novalis, for example, states in his fragments that "das Paradies ist das Ideal des *Erdbodens*" (3, 446). Yet he ensuingly equates the seat of paradise with that of the soul and later writes "das Paradies ist gleichsam über die ganze Erde verstreut und daher so

unkenntlich etc. geworden-..." (3, 447).[1] This insight is warranted a mystical interpretation as it concurs with that mystical teaching that paradise is indeed found within us. At other times we find that the Golden Age is a world of magic and of fairy tales. Novalis imparts poetic conjectures of hope, the mystics teach us that we are indeed already in union, and that it is a matter of ridding our 'selves' of all the negative aspects which hinder our seeing this one true reality.

Given the symbolic language and potential for interpretive variations, I find Novalis' vision of paradise central to interpretations. Paradise beckons those longing for eternity. To forever bask in the bliss of carefree paradise is for romantic poets the reward for a death soulfully longed for as time amounts to that of a fairy tale: "Mit der Zeit muß die Geschichte Märchen werden, sie wird wieder, wie sie anfing" (3, 281). Whether time retells the same fairy tale Novalis does not specify. The pervasive image of paradise conjured up in our minds, thanks to embellished Baroque artistry and childhood renditions of the Genesis story, is by all means romantic; an idyllic nature scene exuding harmonious interrelationships among all living creatures. Peace and love abound in this open space where everything is beautiful, good and just since everything is equal. There was nothing to initiate strife since all the needs were satisfied upon demand. After death, a similar kingdom awaited those whose lives were served in unquestioning obedience to the Lord—i.e., by dutifully following the regime set up by the institution named Church. Novalis intuitively recognized death as

[1] The Thomas Gospel has recently gained more attention for its Zen-like teachings of Christ. The following words, which sound remarkably similar to those of Novalis, read: "His disciples said to him, 'When will the kingdom come?' He said, 'It will not come when it is expected. They will not say,

transformation (3, 259) and believed no misfortune could exist once beyond the golden gates of the original fairy tale.[2]

'Den Himmel auf Erden zu erblicken' (Christenheit) broaches a universal thematic as we keep this vision (memory) of Eden and long for its return. Pictured linearly or chronologically, as in romantic thought, we move further and further from paradise with every passing day. The romantic sees this on the collective scale of humanity; first came the loss of the Garden of Eden, then subsequent loss in the esteemed older cultures of classical Greek civilization, Hindu Indians, agrarian cultures, and indigenous people who lived in a civilization which harbored the principles of living in harmony and balance with the environment, the society and with themselves (elevationist view). Since for some believers, biblical passages must be historically and geographically validated, paradise was believed to be located in Jerusalem or as far East as possible.[3] Gottfried Herder eloquently constructs his view of world history based on an origin of bliss in Auch eine Philosophie. The infant lives in paradise, a time existing until he learns language and gains reason. Herder transfers this individual process onto historical societies. Incidentally, the shift to a 'learned' knowledge comes abruptly, not one that develops organically. Noting that movements

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'Look here,' or 'Look there.' Rather the kingdom of the father is spread out on the earth and people do not see it" (Dart 113).

[2] Novalis includes along with "Tod ist Verwandlung" that death admits one into a second world, which I read something like a second chance! (3, 259) This second chance, by definition, is perfect.

[3] Forget what is Eden: Where is Eden? Fascinating recounts of the geographical placement of Eden, which though ludicrous by most standards today, help shape the mind-frame of the Church members ages ago, and still plague the Church today. One of the most striking is the location of an island east of Asia, which of course has found interest in that the island is surrounded by the metaphor for the unconscious—water.

in history are reactionary, or breaking violently with the prior tradition rather than growing out of them (including and transcending), underscores the dominant destructive patriarchal order of western society in contrast to the nurturing matrimonial or at least more equal representation favored in Eastern tradition. There is then, an innate desire of the romantic spirit to recapture this elemental and original bliss that the so-called "enlightened" adult lacks.

In his classic study Die Idee des goldenen Zeitalters im Werk des Novalis, Hans-Joachim Mähl provides a comprehensive and detailed analysis of elements surrounding Novalis' appreciation of the Golden Age, especially the influential works to which the poet took recourse. This allows me to undertake the next step, which is to identify the mutations the metaphor of the Golden Age undergoes as it becomes romanticized. Mähl's exhaustive study traces the belief of a Golden Age dating from antiquity in a 1000 year period of bliss, considered the return of the *paradiesische Urzeit*, in addition to biblical teaching and the specific works, mostly philosophical (Hemsterhuis, Swedenburg), which influenced Novalis. Analog to the predominant voice of the 1960's, Mähl suggests that in conjuring up the ideal of the past, Novalis formulates the belief that the Golden Age will exist for those who attain it in the future.

At the same time, though, the romantic ideal of paradise is without a temporal basis, and seen rather as a state of feeling which predominated at some time previous to the time now. Novalis synthesizes the past and the future, so that as they fuse, the separation of whether the Golden Age is of the past or the future renders itself

meaningless and futile. Time, one could argue, ruined the perfection of the *Vorzeit* (as in sixth hymn); and so by ridding oneself of the notion of time, one would again be in this paradisiacal setting (by way of poet magician). Therefore, I find both his paradisiacal and apocalyptic symbols referring to a desired regressive state of home in childhood.

Novalis firmly believes poetry to provide for these beautiful escapes from the present: "Nichts ist poëtischer, als Errinnerung und Ahnung, oder Vorstellung der Zukunft" (2, 468). Perhaps this is what poets do best; enabling us to see and feel something non-existing. Of singular interest is that numerous interpreters note the fusion of past and future as a mystical insight (very possibly shared by Novalis himself), at which point I can only respond that the mystic teaches that paradise and eternity have nothing to do with time. As a result, debates as to whether Novalis finds hope in the past or future grant no further insight. Nevertheless, the true mystical teachings urge us not so much to think of avoiding present reality, but rather in terms of transforming each opportunity to its full potential. There is, in other words, in actuality no time as the present, nor is there a reality other than the Ultimate; only illusions which we perceive to hold meaning. One notable distinction often overlooked or misconstrued when looking at mystical elements is that the mystic longs to fulfill the present moment, while the Romantic actively seeks happiness in the past or in idealizing the future. Indeed, it is my belief that, for romantic consciousness, the Golden Age, as the merging of the past with the future, is anything but the present age. And since the mind can wander and adapt as it flies, the ideal of the future is based on

the idyllic past; a past as Mähl writes, that localizes the naiveté of youth, praises childhood innocence, and longs to unify with the harmonious nature harboring untainted secrets. Put differently, the ideal has no civil duties other than frolicking and gratifying desires; no responsibilities awakening the dreamer from sweet slumber. Rebirth delivers one into the imagined old world. To weave together memories with the hopes of the future as the hermit in the novel tells, is the romantic formula for defining history (1, 257-8).[4]

Pearson's highly acclaimed psychoanalytic study on The Hero Within: Six Archetypes we Live By finds that the "promise of a return of the mythic Edenic state is one of the most powerful forces in human life" (26). Pearson continues that the western myth of the fall from paradise, and the suffering we must henceforth endure with only death relieving us of it, includes the belief that by enduring our punishment we will again regain paradise. However, spiritual masters instruct that individual must undertake the spiritual journey, as paradise cannot be entered upon command. Until progressive changes brought about by the second Vatican council, the pseudo-literal image of paradise as appropriated by the romantics dominated Catholic teaching. The teachings have since been somewhat more refined to agree with the teaching of the mystics since the Middle Ages. Pointing us beyond the language to the actual truth, the mystics enlighten us that paradisiacal union is a state of consciousness breached by

[4] F. Schlegel presents his own insightful musings on the image of the Golden Age worth presenting in full: "Das Trugbild einer gewesnen goldnen Zeit ist eins der größten Hindernisse gegen die Annäherung der goldnen Zeit die noch kommen soll. Ist die goldne Zeit gewesen, so war sie nicht recht golden. Gold kann nicht rosten, oder verwittern: es geht aus allen Vermischungen und Zersetzungen unzerstörbar echt wieder hervor. Will die goldne Zeit nicht ewig fortgehend beharren, so mag sie lieber gar nicht anheben, so taugt sie nur zu Elegien über ihren Verlust" (Athenäum Fragmente 243 2, 205-6).

man's desire for an individual self, symbolized by eating from the tree of *knowledge*. The mystical tradition of Christianity shares with other mystical traditions the teaching that heaven, or paradise, is a state of consciousness in pure union with the Ultimate (Pure Land, Pure consciousness), as was Adam before the fall. We are but sentient beings with our bodies as transient housings for the soul.[5]

Heaven and hell, as both Jacob Böhme and Emmanuel Swedenburg agreed, are but representations of the states of our souls. Once again, the tangible language of Zen simplifies philosophical conjectures. A big, tough samurai once went to see a little monk.

> "Monk," he said, in a voice accustomed to instant obedience, "teach me about heaven and hell!"
> The monk looked up at this mighty warrior and replied with utter disdain, "Teach you about heaven and hell? I couldn't teach you about anything. You're dirty. You smell. Your blade is rusty. You're a disgrace, an embarrassment to the samurai class. Get out of my sight. I can't stand you."
> The samurai was furious, He shook and got all red in the face, was speechless with rage. He pulled out his sword and raised it above him, preparing to slay the monk.
> "That's hell," said the monk softly.
> The samurai was overwhelmed. The compassion and surrender of this little man who had offered his life to give this teaching to show him hell! He slowly put down his sword, filled with gratitude, and suddenly peaceful.
> "And that's heaven," said the monk softly.[6]

Union with the ultimate reality, or our true self, allows the experience of perfection, or heaven. A life of separation, brought about by the inability to realize that

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[5] Hildegard visualized the body as a tent for the soul; completely packaged at birth, the body unravels and unfolds through life's journeys and when the body dies off, the soul is released to usher along another body. Kundun, a filming of the early years of the Dalai Lama, contains a vivid, disturbing scene to the western mind. Upon the soul's release, the dying body is immediately hacked up and fed to the vultures. It is disturbing in part due to our elaborate burial rituals, but moreover, the cultural need to see the physical body.

we are already in union, constitutes hell. Mystics persistently remind us that temporal and spatial constructs are but illusions of our limited mind, rendering a discussion on regression back to paradise or procession to the Golden Age as futile. The time, or opportunity, for the Golden Age for mystics is always *now* as this is the only concept which exists. "How misleading", writes Rut Björkman, "is this promise of salvation in a world to come! This salvation lies within ourselves, awaiting our response so as to take effect in our lives here and now" (Mystery of Christ 38). We only exist because we are in paradise. The way home is actually recognizing that we are already in union with God and it is the lack of this awareness that confines us to *samsara*, or unconscious hell. Hence we have titles such as St. Theresa's The Way to Perfection, Böhme's The Way to Christ, Saint Bonaventure's The Soul's Journey into God, St. John of the Cross' Ascent of Mount Carmel to name but a few.

The theological fall, original sin, is an awakening to the fact that we live in a shell of a mortal and finite world. Wilber explains that the 'fall' from paradise is actually an ascension from undifferentiated oneness. The fall has negative connotations since with evolutionary growth comes the painful realization of limitations. Bede Griffiths writes similarly when he interprets the fall as signifying our demise into self-consciousness (versus Pure-consciousness). Sin is simply the state of ignorance of the greater reality surrounding us; sin is the separate self. True evolution (and involution) follows when steps are taken to return to the center and to

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[6] From Christina Feldman and Jack Kornfield eds., Stories of the Spirit Stories of the Heart (New York: HarperCollins, 1991) 295-6.

reverse the state of alienation we suffer. If traveled to the fullest extent, the journey leads to the experiential knowledge that here and now is eternal life.

Mystics favor the characterization of God in terms of pure love, which Herder agrees is the basis of bliss and must prevail as elemental energy throughout history. Herder's consideration that love in its purest form was found in paradise greatly supports a regressive longing and moreover, because paradise remains out of reach, finds believers suffering unrequited love. In accord with Herder, Schiller reminisces back to Greek society as one which should remain exemplary in its humanitarian freedom in his Aesthetic Letters. In "Die Weisheit der Indier" Schiller suggests that the highest romantic goals trace their roots back to the Orient. For the romantics, most things are found far away setting romantic protagonists out traveling to new and distant lands seeking adventure.[7] Rarely, however, are destinations given as much importance as the fortuitous events supplementing the plot. A further characterization of romantic protagonists, that they avoid work, may reflect the childhood years of the authors but also the ideal portrayal of the aesthetic (fully functioning) human. With inwardly turned senses, the romantic hero finds himself by traveling. Up to a certain level, the hero's journey can represent the journey inward to the true self, yet only with reservations since the mystic path is not one of activity but receptive attitude, i.e., minimizing outward action to allow spirit to permeate the inner self.[8]

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[7] As Futterknecht's adage goes: unglückliche Menschen reisen viel. Tieck's character Sternbald, en route to Italy, is an exception.

[8] Authentic self-knowledge comes only by intense inner work and not by visualizing the transcendent but by experiencing it. A note on the terms contemplation and meditation: Contemplatio, resting in God, is the resting in pure consciousness as sought by eastern teaching (which refers to it as meditation). Terminology may be confusing, as eastern tradition sees contemplation as the final step to

"Die Bibel fängt herrlich mit dem Paradiese, dem Symbol der Jugend an und schließt mit dem ewigen Reiche—mit der *heiligen Stadt*" (3, 321). The paradise of adult children is seen as a kingdom, as is eveyone's life the story of the bible: "Anfang der neuen *Periode*: Jedes Menschen Geschichte sol eine Biebel seyn- wird eine Biebel seyn (3, 321).[9] One is led to speculate then, if paradise is symbol of youth, is the Golden Age one of wisdom? Generally, the golden city of Jerusalem symbolizes a progression, one from virgin nature to a rather public domain of a kingdom or city which serves as impetus for a myriad of artistic expressions and literary works such as St. Augustine's City of God or Hildegard's vision of the golden city of Jerusalem. Given that Novalis' believed in the afterlife as literally after life, his metaphor of death deserves a different level of interpretation as does the mystical, which interprets Jerusalem as an inner state. In the traditional established Christian view, the world was to meet an apocalyptic end, and as Hans Küng in On Being a Christian reiterates, this was to happen in the imminent future. As legend had it, a redeemer king would magically appear to collect pious soul to hence lead these into his kingdom, more glorious and affluent than anything ever possible on earth—a fairy tale ending to a fairy tale existence and mindset.

For Schiller, as outlined in the Aesthetic Letters, the final goal of the free state is an organic culmination of identities beyond the individual. The state (ideal and

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meditation whereas in the Christian way, contemplation is the final goal of the spiritual journey of which meditation is the way.

[9] One of Novalis' fragments reads: "Wenn der Geist heiligt, so ist jedes ächte Buch Bibel" (2, 462). If we follow the fragment quoted above, it seems clear that Heinrich was to have died into the Golden Age and lived to tell about it.

poetic) transcends the individual as a conglomeration of *Stoffrieb* and *Formtrieb*. Novalis' following words demonstrate an affinity to Schiller on this subject:

> Die gemäßigte Regierungsform ist halber Staat und halber Naturstand— es ist eine künstliche, sehr zerbrechliche *Maschine*—daher allen genialischen Köpfen höchst zuwider—aber das Steckenpferd unsre Zeit. Ließe sich diese Maschine in ein lebendiges, autonomes Wesen verwandeln, so wäre das große Problem gelößt. Naturwillkühr und Kunstzwang durchdringen sich, wenn man sie in Geist auflößt. Der Geist macht beydes flüßig. Der Geist ist jederzeit poëtisch. Der poëtische Staat—ist der wahrhafte, vollkommne Staat. (2, 468)

Novalis' vision of the kingdom as related in Klingsohr's fairy tale consists of lovers and poets. Joanna Macy, in a book entitled World as Lover World as Self, shows how the Buddhist view of being one with the world facilitates an understanding, perhaps a partnership, as to how we must approach the world. The following sentence found in the Allgemeine Brouillion depicts a similar view as Macy's above-mentioned title: "Nur wer nicht *im* Staate lebt, in dem Sinne, wie man in seiner Geliebten lebt, wird sich über Abgaben beschweren" (3, 313). Equanimity demands seeing your surroundings, and by extension the world, as you would a lover; the desire for union coincides. Pearson also finds the image of lover as the magician's preferred worldview (117). Compare Novalis' answer to what should be seen in light of his understanding of mystical: "Was ist *Mystizismus*—was muß *mystisch* (Geheimnißvoll) behandelt werden? Religion, Liebe, Natur, Staat— Alles *Auserwählte* bezieht sich auf Mystizism. Wenn alle Menschen ein paar Liebende wären, so fiele der Unterschied zwischen M[ystizismus] und N[icht] M[ystizism] weg (3, 420). The following chapter covers the mystical understanding of love in greater

detail, but suffice it for now to regard the capability to truly see *all* people as lovers as evidence of mystical transformation.

Selected biblical references allude to the coming of the Kingdom, not the least of which is the cry of the psalmist that at the given time, all people shall live in peace and the lion lie with the lamb. The idyllic image of the lion and lamb lying together in peace, conjured up again in Goethe's Novelle, has a similar reference in Novalis as one of his last entries in Glauben und Liebe: "Wenn die Taube, Gesellschafterin und Liebling des Adlers wird, so ist die goldne Zeit in der Nähe oder gar schon da, wenn auch noch nicht öffentlich anerkannt und allgemein verbreitet" (2, 498). By medium of parables, Jesus hoped to bring the truth to a level people could understand, since most are unable to grasp the meaning of the unfiltered actuality that 'the kingdom of God is within you'. Hence in the parables, the kingdom assumed everyday objects: the lost coin found, the return of the prodigal son, the pearl of great price for which a man sold of his belongings. The parable of the mustard seed served as one of Jesus' favorites: "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches" (Luke 13: 18-19). The splendor of the heavenly city of Jerusalem with its alleluia-singing angels, flowing robes and St. Peter as porter compared to a mustard seed? Thomas Keating points out in a commentary on this parable that Jesus was probably engaging in a bit of confrontational joking, since the Jewish myth of the great redemption included the image of the great cedar of Lebanon, the gargantuan proud tree producing yards of

shade and ample shelter (Kingdom 37). To ridicule this fantasy, Jesus offered them the mustard seed, more a weed than a tree. The kingdom, therefore, was not to be found in something spectacular or extraordinary as a rare tree, but rather in the common and perhaps even undesirable elements surrounding us.[10] As with the common coin, the common wedding guests, the baking flour and the barren fig tree to denote the kingdom, Jesus insists on using common symbols in his parables. The parables suggest nothing fantastic or grandiose about the union of God in heaven; it is purely living our common life here on earth in the realization that oneness with God is our natural state, not a super-sensory accomplishment (Björkman Mysticism 61).

The romantics sought out one parable in particular to construct their vision of the kingdom in the Golden Age: that you must become as little children or you may not enter. Novalis, in his mission to renew the world, closely followed Rousseau's directive to return to nature, to the beginnings of time and to celebrate the child, in the hopes of becoming a child. The newly emerging man, educed from his own shattered ruins, is really nothing more than a newly born child appearing in higher form. Schiller's Aesthetic Letters introduce the concept of *Spieltrieb* as a quality added to the adult's psychological make-up to render it whole. Man only plays when he is fully man, and only then (when fully man) can he play. It is a child, for instance, who appears as redeeming force in Die Lehrlinge. As newly initiated leader of the Golden Age in the magical fairy tale told by Klingsohr, the newborn Fabel reigns supremely.

[10] Keating does note that the other gospel commentators, notably Luke and Matthew, elaborated a bit on the mustard shrub to make it a tree or the greatest of shrubs. The Thomas Gospel is probably closest to Jesus' actual words. "It is like a grain of mustard seed, smaller than all seeds. But when it falls on

In fact, Novalis posits that we are actually children in our germane essence, which supports a regressive stance, since, "Wo Kinder sind, da ist ein goldnes Zeitalter" (2, 457) and Fabel's voice encourages to forever remain a child. Another pervasive image of the child as harbinger of the new age is from the fifth Hymnen an die Nacht, appearing in the Athenäums collection 1800. In this poem, a child loiters around gravesites to initiate the earthly departed into a higher people. In the following example, the child represents a healing death:

> Der Jüngling bist du, der seit langer Zeit
> Auf unsern Gräbern steht in tiefen Sinnen;
> Ein tröstlich Zeichen in der Dunkelheit-
> Der höhern Menschheit freudiges Beginnen.
> Was uns gesenkt in tiefe Traurigkeit
> Zieht uns mit süßer Sehnsucht nun von hinnen.
> Im Tode ward das ewge Leben kund,
> Du bist der Tod und machst uns erst gesund. (1, 147).

The fifth hymn depicts, but does not name, Christ as the new man who is born into a stale essentially dead adult world. The gods having gone before lay buried in the unchildlike adults. Hope is not for this life, though, but for the eternal life after death. To fully understand Novalis, it must be reiterated that his Golden Age has its time of revelation post mortem—leading to romantic fascination for a welcome death. Appropriately entitled 'Sehnsucht nach dem Tode', the sixth hymn includes:

> Mit banger Sehnsucht sehn wir sie
> In dunkle Nacht gehüllet,
> In dieser Zeitlichkeit wird nie
> Der heiße Durst gestillet.
> Wir müssen nach der Heimat gehn,
> Um diese heilge Zeit zu sehn. (verse 7).

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cultivated ground, it puts forth a large branch and provides a shelter for the birds of heaven" (Dart 52). Dart and Riegert's commentary agrees with Keating.

To enter the golden gates of heaven requires the physical death for the romantic and in any case, death is glorified as it is a necessary, and welcome, precursor to this fantasized afterlife in which to escape the turbulent world into which the unfortunate romantic was cast. Undeniably true to Protestant teaching, this view is also in accordance with the glorification of martyrdom held sacred by Anabaptists. In the grave, in Sophie, lay hope for the future. Indeed, Novalis links the mystery of the woman with death as the following aphorism (Allgemeines Brouillon) demonstrates: "Der Busen ist die in *Geheimniß-Stand erhobne* Brust— die moralisirte Brust. ... So z.B. ist ein gestorbner Mensch ein in abs[oluten] Geheimnißzustand erhobener Mensch" (3, 290).

Since for Novalis and his admirers night so readily receives a mystical interpretation symbolizing death, it may be good at this point to offer a slight digression to bring to light particular nuances. The metaphor of the night—as relative to death—has a long tradition in mystical literature which lends itself to a comparison with Novalis' use particularly in the Geistliche Lieder and in Hymnen an die Nacht. Generally, the romantic sense distinguishes night not only as the absence of day in addition to concomitant metaphorical uses as opposite of light and reason, but moreover a transition from the outer public world to an inner private one. Night signifies sleep, the unseen, and the dream world. Most importantly, night is the magical element as depicted by Tieck in the following image: "Mondbeglänzte Zaubernacht,/ Die den Sinn gefangen hält, Wundervolle Märchenwelt, Steig auf in der alten Pracht!" In Hymnen, night, "heilige, unausprechliche/Geheimnisvolle Nacht" is

"dunkel und unausprechlich,/ Heimlich wie du selbst bist" and is over the series of poems transferred to the realm of death. Hymnen an die Nacht present a religious rendering of day giving way to night turned towards the hope of eternal dawn. For the romantic, the night is alluring and an invitation to broaden inner horizons; for the mystic, the night signifies a narrowing of intent as wellsprings of cushioning comforts dry up so that when one has endured the darkness of night, the self is ready to crack. The referents of night and death from the causal or non-dual level of consciousness are misread if assigning to them referent from the psychic realm of consciousness.

The romantic appreciation of darkness contrasts well with that of the mystical. Associated with magic, evils and night which disappear at the break of dawn, the romantic darkness matures into the mystical account. Meister Eckhart follows in the Dionysian manner of the introvertive mystic with metaphors such as the following to represent night: nothing, darkness, silence, barren, vastness, desert and wilderness. John of the Cross demystifies the mystical night, or the night of the senses as a painful period in the spiritual journey in which the sensory apparatus has dried up and ceases to find satisfaction in any prior way. The night is a purgative transformational period which must be endured in the journey toward ultimate union. Physical death is the more tangible of deaths, but not the most important on the spiritual journey. The night and death constructions for the romantic, however, prove elemental to their philosophy. As Lukács recalls, "alles, womit sie [the romantics] das Leben erobern

wollten, reichte bloß für einen schönen Tod aus, ihre Lebensphilosophie war nur eine des Todes, ihre Lebenskunst eine des Sterbens" (Schulz 35).[11]

Since the young Romantics found no opportunity for fulfillment in this world, all efforts were for the next. This being said, identical observations can be made of the mystical view of the world; the ways of the world are not your ways O Lord. Yet the journey to perfect romantic consciousness, generally appearing as the second level of reality where everything is experienced as greater than what it really is, coincides only partially with the essential mystical goal of attaining Buddha consciousness, Christ consciousness or any other comparable terms such as *nirvana*. Perhaps the Buddhist term does offer the clearest example of the emphasis on the *now*. Only the enlightened student entirely comprehends the reality of the phrase *samsara* is *nirvana*. *Samsara* is the evil and illusory world we live in daily life; *nirvana* is complete obliviousness to the world in a state of infused meditation. In reality, no difference exists between the two; there is only *nirvana* when one has detached from all the elements which constitute our imperfect self.

Lothar Pikulik examines how the late romantics continued coping with the dissatisfaction found in this life in an appropriately entitled book Ungenügen an der Normalität. For the romantics the next life was a literal, however unknown yet unduly glorified, promise. For the mystics the next life is metaphorical representation for the other life, the true life and what this means having been previously discussed. It is

[11] In the essay "Does the Philosophy of Mysticism Rest on a Mistake", Anthony Perovich examines to what extent Kantian epistemology has influenced the study of mysticism. He begins his argument reminding us that Kant was vehemently against any belief that an experience of divine union could

true that both the romantics and the mystics find the reality of everyday life limiting, but for the former the method of coping is escape; for the latter, it is transformation. Where for Novalis, the key to his innermost self was Sophie, herself a child both in memories and in the grave, the mystic gives claim to no one but God.

Based on the paradigm of the old, the new world was to spawn from memories of the old. Novalis was a man with a mission: "zur Bildung der Erde sind wir berufen" (2, 427). The mother Mary archetype combines the image of the great earth mother, the Isis cult and the bearer of the baby Jesus, who promised believers a new world. Kittler believes the archetypal mother figure (archetypes here used as abiding patterns in the psyche in the Jungian sense) represented the all for the romantics stating that "nature, love, woman—the terms were synonymous in the discourse network of 1800" (73). Woman is also linked with moon and water symbolism, and water is discussed especially in the Lehrlinge.

In Die Lehrlinge, the boy praises the motherly waters of life saying:

> Wie diese Wellen, lebten wir in der goldnen Zeit; in buntfarbigen Wolken, diesen schwimmenden Meeren und Urquellen des Lebendigen auf Erden, liebten und erzeugten sich die Geschlechter der Menschen in ewigen Spielen; wurden besucht von den Kindern des Himmels und erst in jener großen Begebenheit, welche heilige Sagen die Sündflut nennt, ging diese blühende Welt unter. (1, 104-5)

Moreso than integrate, Novalis longs to inhabit the other side, whether it be the other side of life, the other side of reality, or the other side of death, he longs for whatever is lacking. The poetical sphere enables this fulfillment of his innate desires. The return will therefore be same but different: "In der *künftigen* Welt ist alles, wie in der

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come to fruition in this life. Perovich's essay is included in Robert Forman, ed., The Problem of Pure

ehemaligen Welt— und *doch alles ganz Anders*" (3, 281). Novalis envisions to create his world based on that of the old, but perfect it by virtue of his being the creator. Nature will reign in this heavenly world, a fairy tale world where everything relates "geheimnißvoll und unzusammenhängend... Die ganze Natur muß auf eine wunderlich Art mit der ganzen Geisterwelt vermischt seyn" (3, 280). An image much like the dream our life is to become. As a poet, he facilitates this call to building *romantisches Bewußtsein* bubbling out of natal waters.

Irreverently scattered about the pages of nature writing, water signifies numerous elements of life. F. Schlegel has the sage search for the origin of nature in the waters, insightfully true in biological evolution as well as psychological. The depths of the waters find immediate association with the unconscious, to include the collective and personal history found within. In Lehrlinge, we read that flowing water carries us to distant destinations, but it is also true that water carries us home, which for the romantic consciousness merges at the same point. Faber, in his aptly entitled book Novalis: Die Phantasie an die Macht, sees anything that Novalis would define as new as a *return* of the old.[12] Drowning happens to be a favorite poetic medium to meet the other side, such as Edward and Ottilie in Goethe's Wahlverwandschaften or the number of expressionist characters drowning to meet their end, perhaps symbolically being swallowed up by the water of the uterus. Water leads home, as the

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Consciousness (New York: Oxford UP, 1990) 237-253.

[12] As may be expected by this time, Faber also refers to Novalis as a mystic—adding to the generally patronizing reading of the poet by mystifying the '*Todesmystik*', '*Nachtmystik*' and '*Grabmystik*'—terms which by their obscurity do not warrant being included in the general overview of mystical currents.

opening caption given above finds us back in the lap of nature. Similar words conclude the miner's song in the novel—the waves will carry us back where we came from:

> Am Ende wird von Banden los
> Das Meer die leere Burg durchdringen
> Und trägt auf wiechen grünen Schwingen
> Zurück uns in der Heimat Schoß. (1, 250)[13]

The cry for the 'new man' is given voice at various times throughout history. For Novalis, the world began anew when Jesus returned as the New Adam (3, 321). Compare Novalis' idea with that of Thomas Merton, who in his book The New Man identifies the new man as arising in Christ, after dying to the false self incorporated in Adam. The fantasies died with the fantasizers; the turn of the next century picked up the cry for the new man once more. Romantic thought ushered in the concept of the new man, the truly human, one who developed a new consciousness which was evolving towards pure spirit. In Hyperion, Hölderlin proposes that upon having reached full potential, humans become God. In certain aspects, the youthful calling for the new human to 'romanticize' the world echoes that of the mature call to 'mysticize', as it was indeed proposing, albeit on a more sensual than spiritual level, that we do have access to the original blessing at the center of our being.

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[13] Also: "[sie] bejammerten das alte, herrliche Leben im Schoße der Natur..." (Lehrlinge 1, 95)

Regression

Since Novalis believed children to be smarter and wiser than adults, he longed to break from his adult mold stifling his freedom and return to his childhood. While it is true that this cannot feasibly be a literal regression, Wilber argues that the mindset of the romantics, by virtue of their idealizing the past, was indeed implanted in a previous temporal sphere. So why is this vision of the child so problematic? Wilber convincingly argues that romantic belief links back directly with the cherished union of infancy, though I modify this slightly to appropriate Novalis. Since romantic belief was based on a tenet of perennial philosophy, the core Romantics *regressed* back to the point of origin rather than completing a progressive and transformative manner of life as does the mystic. Childhood dreams present the new way of understanding, of combating the traditional adult role controlled by negatively seen reason. Joanna Macy, who urges us to view the world as lover and as self, emphasizes, as does Wilber, the narcissistic element of union in infancy:

> In our infancy as a species, we felt no separation from the natural world around us. Trees, rocks, and plants surrounded us with a living presence as intimate and pulsing as our own bodies. In that primal intimacy, which anthropologists call 'participation mystique' we were as one with our world as a child in the mother's womb. (Macy 13)

By itself, I can see how this regressive argument can lose validity, perhaps even fail dismally, under academic scrutiny. But the narcissistic element, seen in conjunction with the prominent ego in addition to the dangers of sinking into the self, or introversion, as coined by Jung, the romantic circle, pun intended, completes itself. Carl Gustav Jung identifies sinking into the soul, an increasing disinterest in material

matters and withdrawal from the world characteristic of *introversion*. Silberer splendidly connects the negative potential of this good intention; an introversion neurosis which can all too quickly have one "sink into fantasy as he retires from reality" (243). Images from an introverted state bring into reality (through literature in our case) things only attainable in fantasy (to which the Hoffmann's Nachtstücke or Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" come to mind). In the words of Silberer: "Dying, going down, vaults, dark temples, underworld, the sea, the descent of Faust to the mothers. Introversion fulfills here clearly the aim of bringing to reality, something that is attainable only by phantasy" (244). And further: "Introversion is an excellent road to lazy phantasying in the regressive direction" (274) since one is much to attracted to the 'feel good' comfort of living within the control of one's own world. It is clearly a pitfall readily found in Romantic literature.

By extension, the inward (read backward) momentum of introversion carries with it the threat of regression. "Introversion is continually connected with regression. Regression... is a harking back to more primitive psychic activities, from thinking to gazing, from doing to hallucinating; a striving back towards childhood and the pleasures of childhood (Silberer 245). The author continues as we would ourselves deduce—the regression completed when we return to our mother's womb.[14]

Born selfish, the child is incapable of reflective thinking and so lives happily and carefree as upon command, all needs and wants are satisfied. In psychological language the child is pre-personal. The romantics, as Wilber finds, fail to see the

[14] A regressed adult on his own accord, Günther Grass's protagonist of the Blechtrommel characterizes

difference in differentiating between elemental *pre* stages and evolved *trans* stages. One of Wilber's favorite examples to illustrate this point involves the analogy of an acorn and the oak tree. The romantics, in longing for the perfection of childhood, inadvertently longed to get back to the acorn stage instead of seeing the greater reality and ripeness of the seed-bearing oak tree. "Alles ist Samenkorn" takes on another dimension in this regard![15]

The Gospel of Thomas presents a more elaborate version of the familiar words of Matthew's 'unless you become as little children'. It is found as number 22:

> Jesus saw some infants being nursed and said to his disciples, "These children are like those who enter the kingdom." They said to him, "If we are children shall we enter the kingdom?"
> Jesus said to them, "When you make the two one, and when you make the inner like the outer and the outer like the inner, and the upper like the lower, and when you make the male and the female into a single one, so that the male is not male and the female is not female, when you make eyes in place of an eye, a hand in place of a hand, a foot in place of a foot, and an image in place of an image, then you shall enter the kingdom."[16]

The spiritual journey, as was shown in the first chapter, helps one grow and evolve, into a fully functioning adult. The excerpt quoted above reads almost nonsensically, as it replaces the same with the same. And yet it is the transfigured same found in the homecoming story in the second chapter. The child, as a story like that of "The Emporer's New Clothes" demonstrates, sees things as they really are. They have not yet the capacity to stand back and think about, reflect and interpret what it is they are

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to a debilitating extent the ineptitude of regressive thinking.

[15] Novalis. Logologische Fragmente. 2, 563.

[16] Also commented on by Wilber in No Boundaries 28.

seeing. The emphasis on child here is the ability for growth inherent in the child. The child has not formed a self, but it has to do so to lose it again and thereby be as a child in all things but pre-personal. Wilber cites studies on brain research to comment on how I would interpret in part the meaning becoming like children, that the higher evolved an individual is, the fewer stereotypical male/female traits are manifested. In other words, these adults transcend differences lower on the evolutionary scale to become whole. But they do so not by belittling or condemning them, but by integrating the differences to calibrate an equilibrium. Anima and animus, as complementary traits, find equal representation not by a magical jump, but by evolving out of the lower states of gender specific consciousness into a fully human being.[17]

"Wenn Xst sagt, werdet, wie die Kinder—so meynt er indeterminirte Kinder- nicht Verzogene, Verweichlichte, süßliche-moderne Kinder" (3, 560). Novalis had a specific image in mind when he spoke of the *indetermiertes Kind* as the following is found among his introspection: "Nicht alle Kinder sind Kinder". In its totality the statement reads: Ewige Jungfrau ist nichts, als *ewiges, weibliches Kind.* Was entspricht der Jungfrau bey uns Männern. Ein Mädchen, die nicht mehr wahrhaftes *Kind* ist, ist nicht mehr Jungfrau. (Nicht alle Kinder sind Kinder) (3, 281). This sentiment struck me as an important insight to a withstanding notion that paradise is a state of no sexual differences. Perhaps this is what Novalis is inferring; the true child knows of no difference, is in Wilber's term, pre-differentiated. This corresponds to

[17] Personality tests, such as the Meyers-Briggs, would find balanced temperament types hovering around 4 X's as the 16 types are assessed. This presents a balance between introvertive/extravertive,

John Crossan's premise in a commentary to the Thomas Gospel entitled "Paradise Regained". Crossan argues, though unconvincingly and very romantically, that it is natural that people dissatisfied in this world seek solace in the idea of a more fulfilling life either at the beginning of time, Eden, or at the end of time, as the Apocalypse (solace?). Crossan sets the teachings of the Gospel of Thomas as antithetical to that of Matthew and Luke, which interpret the words of Jesus to prepare us for a kingdom after this world. The Thomas Gospel quite poignantly illustrates the closeness of the Kingdom of which Jesus speaks; it is there the moment one unifies fully with God in his—the timeless—world. Crossan quickly points out that the Garden of Eden existed prior to the differentiation of sexes, meaning that when Jesus urges his followers to become children, Crossan interprets this to mean to be asexual: "The newborn child's asexual nature becomes a perfect model for the unified state Jesus says we must aspire to" (Dart, 98). He further maintains that celibate asceticism is the way for all to reach this state, to reclaim Paradise Lost. I believe Crossan has fallen prey to the failure to differentiate along the lines of Wilber's fine argument previously included.

One other link comes to mind, words of Meister Eckhart which were expounded on by Jäger, who finds that Eckhart offers a telling description of the virgin in relationship to the wife; the virgin, for Eckhart, is one who can say, "because I am neither a girl, nor a woman, nor a husband, nor a wife, nor a widow, nor a virgin, nor a master, nor a maid, nor a servant....But since of all these I am neither one, I am just a something among somethings, and so I go" (Sermon 13b cited in Jäger The Way 46-

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intuitive/sensing, feeling/thinking and perceptive/judging types.

7). Jäger comments though, which I find apposite for Novalis and the commentary by Crossan given above, that "the emptiness and receptivity of the virgin are not the ultimate goal of mystics; they must go on to become 'wives,' that is, they must become fruitful in such a way that the gifts received in virginity are reborn back into God in gratitude" (47). This example follows the argument that the undifferentiated bliss of childhood must be transformed through adulthood; as adults we must disassociate with the identities we have put on for ourselves and thereby become as children, receptive, and single minded so God can fulfill his work to completion. Angelus Silesius writes similarly: "Virginity is noble, yet mother you must be,/ Or else you are a field robbed of fecundity (81). This is the incredible wisdom of the mystics so rudimentary yet laying out the entire path of the mystic; that yes, we do have to become as children if we are to enter the kingdom of God. To be a child means to participate fully in divine glory here and now afforded those having dismantled the false self system which constitutes our adult persona. The mother of God as virgin serves as prototype. That Mary was without sin is typically seen as a physical attribute which has hence identified sexual union with sin for religions. The mystical interpretation of the metaphor of love (next chapter) indicates a greater maturity in attitude towards sexuality. Mary was a virgin in that she was completely emptied of herself—of virgin material—to accept God with her whole being. That Mary knew not man can be seen either as of no interest to a mystical interpretation or as indicative of her being receptive to no one but God. The mystical interpretation claims by no

means to be the only valid interpretation, but indisputably touches the deepest roots of understanding.

Heinrich von Ofterdingen

If we interpret Novalis to believe that to be a child is to live, then it follows logically that adults are in essence dying, and must die to become children once again. Then you would be reborn as the eternal child in heavenly bliss. But what of those elder individuals, such as Klingsohr and the sage in the cave who exert such wisdom and guidance? If Heinrich, as the protagonist in Heinrich von Ofterdingen, for instance, is indeed an extension of Wilhelm Meister, we are presented with an archetype representative for humanity. It could therefore be deduced that Novalis makes the appeal that we must listen to our elders, since Heinrich is greatly aided by these characters. Elderly sages appeal because, given their age, they are links to the Golden Age and stand out from the normal adult world. But perhaps these characters are seen as supra-normal—past the stage of adulthood and representing the wisdom of ancients. Novalis poses the question of himself:

> GESCH[ICHTS]LEHRE. Was ist eigentlich Alt? Was Jung?
> Jung—wo die Zukunft vorwaltet.
> Alt—wo die Vergangenheit die Übermacht hat.
> Jung und alt- polare Praedicate der historischen Substanz. (Die Accidenzen sind immer polarisch.)
> Kein *Alterthum*, ohne Jungendthum—und umgek[ehrt].
> Alt entspricht dem Starren.
> Jung—dem Flüssigen.
> Das Alte ist das *Gebildete*—plastisch.
> Das Junge—das *Bewegliche*—Gemeinsame. (3, 258)

Although Novalis concedes that age and youth are relational, they are nevertheless presented as polar opposites lacking a transitional pole. Yet as some children are not children, some adults are not like other adults, and these are the wise teachers. Myths, fairy tales and legends feature a prototype of a glorious old age in which wisdom filters through the elderly for the benefit of the community. The romantic period commonly features artist figures as presenter of higher truths: Sternbald's mentor, the renaissance artist Dürer; Wilhelm Meister's tutor the Abbe; Heinrich matures in the presence of Klingsohr and before that under the miner and the hermit who are each facilitators on the path. The teachers pay homage to the mystic tradition, since Heinrich's tutors were based on Böhme's inspiration.[18]

Often Novalis' reference to age is linked to antiquity—back to the days when people were all artists. Commenting on the unpoetical nature of the theater of his time, Novalis writes that "die Alten verstanden das auch besser. Bey ihnen war alles poetischer" (3, 691). Unquestioningly, the utmost appreciation of art is tied in with Novalis' image of the old, both as the individual and as period in time. His essay on Goethe (2, 640-2) eulogizes the artist of the man. Novalis compared classical

[18] I offer the following to give an indication of Novalis' reading of Böhme as given in a letter to Ludwig Tieck: "Jacob Böhm les ich jezt im Zusammenhange, und fange ihn an zu verstehn, wie er verstanden werden muß. Man sieht durchaus in ihm den gewaltigen Frühling mit seinen quellenden, treibenden, bildenden und mischenden Kräften, die von innen heraus die Welt gebären" (4, 322). With all the attributive adjectives, it is difficult to ascertain (not only in this selection) what Novalis really gathers from the nature mystic's teachings. Feilchenfeld, however, who examines the direct and vicarious influences of Böhme, offers some excellent insights into the cave story, not the least of which is that the miner is modeled after Böhme. Both on the level of ideas, but also, Feilchenfeld finds, in the choice of words and style. It was of course, at precisely this time of writing, 1800, that Novalis was introduced to the writings of Böhme, and would find in him a prototype after which to sketch his own characters. Subsequently it is permissible to adduce that Novalis saw the nature mystic as his own teacher at this time.

literature to antiquity; only by re-living that prior period (even if only in memories) can full glory be revealed:

> Der classischen Litteratur geht es, wie der Antike; sie ist uns eigentlich nicht gegeben—sie ist nicht vorhanden—sondern sie soll von uns erst hervorgebracht werden. Durch fleißiges und geistvolles Studium der Alten ensteht erst eine klassische Litteratur für uns—die die Alten selbst nicht hatten (2, 642).

In a sense the quotation implies a belief in evolutionary progress, but then again, perhaps lays claim to the romantic ideal of perfecting the past in memory to create the present. Having undertaken the path themselves, enlightened teachers understand the process experientially and are not raveled up in vicarious accounts thereof. Consequently, the mystic leads home as he lives there. Home, whether it appears metaphorically as a medieval castle with innumerable chambers, the harbor of a sole tree trunk in the barren desert or perhaps a fully furnished modern apartment in the city, is found solely in presence of the Ultimate. Home for the romantics, as the following discussion on Novalis' novel indicates, was more the subjective world of feelings located in the self, of which God was certainly a constituent as he was naturally found in all.

The sixth chapter of Heinrich von Ofterdingen describes the limitations binding the prevailing business mind to counter that of the spirited artist. Through his characters, Novalis laments that even the business mentality was of a wholesome quality back in the middle ages, but has since steadily declined into a banal existence of looking outward to serve only reason. The way of the poet, however, traversed the inward path of spirit who continues to freely choose the better half. The poet is one

who searches the way of wisdom, not only knowledge. As the young Heinrich muses, he identifies the two different routes to knowledge as he philosophizes with the businessmen: one laborious way through experience, the other, so much the fairer, is "der Weg der innern Betrachtung" which in contrast to the first, is but a sprightly leap.

These two basic ways of knowing find mention among various sources throughout history, of which I will include Wilber. In his first book, The Spectrum of Consciousness, Wilber introduces a number of themes he develops and expands in subsequent works. As mentioned in the introduction, much of the framework's success lies in Wilber's presentation of human consciousness as a fluid continuum of stages or phases, much like a spectrum. The spectrum of consciousness is rooted in the two modes of knowing, such as taught in the most ancient traditions: we have the capacity to know both conventional, representational knowing (reason), and that which is a 'natural' experiential knowing, or wisdom. Aldous Huxley begins his work on the Perennial Philosophy by distinguishing between the lower and the higher way of knowing. Of course the difficulty with this is that we immediately place a 'better than' label on the higher, which really is only different. Transcendent levels simply represent the psychological terminology of the extended capabilities of the mind. Different cultures encourage certain levels of consciousness; western culture favors reason-based knowing and so seeks to support rational development to a high degree. Wilber emphasizes that upon being awakened to the experiential form of knowledge, the resilience of the former gradually dissipates, or perhaps seen differently, is taken up by the experiential to move the self to new horizons. Each of the modes of

knowing, moreover, can be found at different levels of consciousness. Wilber explains that psychological schools, for instance, each address a different level of consciousness when working with a client; the psychoanalyst probing at a layer a bit more hidden, and closer to the unconscious root of a problem, than that which the behaviorist addresses. One method is not more valuable than the other, but each can access different levels.

Before addressing the specifically transcendental ways of knowing as derived from mystical teaching, I find one more note to add to the rational mode of knowing, which has a tendency to come across as 'lower' in a derogative sense seen in conjunction with the transpersonal mode. Musil identified the rational as leading into the mystical, a much more accurate representation of the relationship. The rational thinker uses a highly complex formal operative cognitive process which allows meta-cognition, the ability to distance oneself from the thought process and reflect upon it. I stress this as a possible reading of the romantics, as Wilber recognizes that this capability allows one to transcend one's own thought process, entertain hypothetical, or perhaps antithetical, possibilities and one "can become highly introspective" (Sex 173). In other words, what may be read as irrational (anti-rational) is purely utilizing the full capabilities of our highly logical, intuitive and imaginative rational mind. The mystics are never against reason, as one could perhaps argue are the romantics, but build upon the rational mind to overcome its limitations. This is especially true of Christian mystics such as Meister Eckhart, John Ruusbroec, John of the Cross and Thomas Merton while in the language, at least, of the women mystics, the fact that

they were much less educated than their male counterparts, leads to more illustrative and intuitive insights.

While the teachers, or we can even say spiritual guides, of the romantic youth function in part as ideal father figures (see footnote) who encourage the development of artistic genius and poetical fantasy.[19] The effective teacher's presence, words and direction create a safe realm conducive imaginative thinking for the young seeker leading him to expand consciousness and access the secrets of nature and her teachings through the glorification of the senses. Given the female's traditional connection with nature and the earth, the mother was the first and foremost model of the teacher. Without recourse to language, the mother's role was to allow her child's future to unfold without significant intervention. Incorporating maternal intuition with the powers bestowed on the poet/priest archetype, the romantic teacher urges the disciples to listen to the imagination as it weaves through the mysterious mazes of the inner self. The poet Klingsohr, for example, lives the romantic ideals to the point that others could emulate them in him. Heinrich's mentor represents the poetical philosopher who was absolute creator (3, 415). He not only understood but had perfected the art of magical idealism: "Alle Bezauberung geschieht durch partielle Identification mit dem Bezauberten—den ich so zwingen kann, eine Sache so zu sehn, zu glauben, zu fühlen, wie ich will" (2, 395). The pure poet encourages self-discovery beyond the common boundaries.

[19] Ideal father figures would be those male figures who engage in non-traditional roles, such as nurturing, guiding rather than commanding (to contrast, for example, Wilhelm Meister's father who quickly denounced Wilhelm's dreams as irrational).

Zen Buddhism offers us quite the contrary in regards to the means of an effective teacher, whom the student has sought out, to transmit knowledge. The spiritual master emanates wisdom (received, not learned knowledge, a compatible idea with the romantic gift of the poet) and knows the student with minimal conversation as this knowing is on a different level (much like a mother). In the Christian tradition, the belief is that 'the Spirit will teach you all things'; a spirit who manifests himself through various mediums such as nature, other people, or readings. Given this belief in the power of knowledge through the spirit, Christianity lacks the role of active teacher such as in its eastern counterpart. At the risk of sounding like Novalis, it must be said that the Christian tradition endowed teachers at its outset. The Desert Fathers fulfilled this role, for example, in third and fourth century Egypt. The abbot of a monastery community presides as spiritual director for his flock, and if graced with the gift of discernment, can be seen in a similar role to the Zen master. The words of the greatest Christian teacher, Jesus, are of course readily available in the scriptures.

In contrast to the guides we have pictured in the romantic journey towards union, the most effective guides on the mystical spiritual journey are often not so 'nice'. One biblical example which comes to mind is the teaching that one must renounce one's family to follow Jesus, or that one must sell all possessions. Often, especially in the eastern tradition, teachers seem brutally direct and not at all the epitome of our reasoned idea the selfless love, compassion and concern they are to be of essence. This is at least, how our ego interprets it. Since spiritual guides know that our egos, as the false self, suffocate our true selves, this stubborn energy is best beaten

directly into the ground, where it will continue to arise depending on how much is left. In his journal One Taste, Wilber comments on how 'real Zen' becomes 'grandmother Zen' in many new Age circles. Compassion, he writes, is not "please be nice to my ego" but liberate me from myself.[20] As it is beyond the scope of this paper to dwell on the specifics of higher levels of consciousness, suffice it to say at this point that the romantic, without sounding too demeaning, practices grandmotherly compassion, as it seeks to protect and preserve the ego which allows the romantic to dream. The spiritual teacher's role is to keep us on the painful path of purification as we humbly purge ourselves of ourselves. Of course the more possessions we have accumulated over our lives to comply with our false self's need for security, esteem and power, the longer and more painful the journey keeping most from arriving at the nakedness of our original self before we were born. To be as children requires having cleansed the false-self system, not by wishing it, but by sitting through the desert experience.

Parables, given their layered levels of interpretation, prove an effective teaching method for spiritual teachers. The teacher is less important than how open he or she is to the guidance of the Spirit to give the necessary instruction that will connect with the spirit within the listener. In Siddhartha, Hermann Hesse offers an excellent example of the wise sage in the character of the ferryman; a humble and unassuming character who points to the river as ultimate teacher. If you and your mind are quiet, you will hear what the river says. True teachers only point so that one reaches the

[20] It is common for individuals undertaking a Sufi retreat to keep a diary. The agony of the dying ego is documented in Tweedie's journal published as Irene Tweedie, Daughter of Fire (Inverness: Golden Sufi Center) 1986.

meaning within oneself. The Desert Fathers offer a similar example. A monk, who when asked by a novice where and how to find enlightenment, responded that the seeker was to sit alone in his cell; it would teach him everything. Jesus spoke in parables, which he often ended in "let everyone heed what he hears" because he wanted to reach as many people on different levels of consciousness as possible. The Gospel of Matthew covers most of the parables, especially in Jesus' explanations of the kingdom of God. The disciples at one point even asked why he spoke in parables, to which he responded:

> To you has been given a knowledge of the mysteries of the reign of God, but it has not been given to the others. To the man who has, more will be given, until he grows rich; the man who has not, will lose what little he has.
> I use parables when I speak to them because they look but do not see, they listen but do not hear or understand. (Matt 13 11-13)

Those devoted to the mystical path progress and grow rich in understanding as the deeper levels arise. Jesus refers to the spiritual senses to which most are not attuned and therefore cannot begin to grasp the deeper meanings of the parables. The intellect approaches the parables as riddles to be solved; the soul embraces the parables in faith for guidance and if receptive will receive guidance through them (wisdom teaching: needed at that time and place). Teachers of the great tradition are usually adults, if not quite elderly. Wisdom is not innate; even Buddha, though destined to become the great leader, spent his youth preparing for this mission. If the mystic exudes clarity of thought, childlike wonder and simple appreciation of the world, it is because he or she is seeing things as they really are; sees them as the Infinite does.

Wisdom teachers often demonstrate an appreciation of humor in their stories or parables. A particular Zen story illustrates the limitations of all knowledge, especially in references to those prone to brag about their learnedness. While being carried across the sea to a distant destination, a learned scholar repeatedly asked the sailor whether he had studied various fields. The sailor, in response to the question whether he had studied theology, chemistry, botany and the list of other sciences would humbly admit he had not, whereupon the scholar would shake his head and mutter that unfortunately, the man had wasted most of his life. Then came the day when the ship met rough waters, encouraging the sailor to ask of the scholar whether he had bothered to study swimology. Upon the negative answer, the reply: Then you have wasted your life, because the boat is sinking. This type of teaching addresses the ego directly on whichever level of understanding.[21]

Romantic teachers have perfected the art of seeing spiritually through the eyes of magical idealism originating in the ego. The protagonist of Novalis' novel meets generous influential teachers along the path to the inner self. The miner and the hermit prove indispensable for Heinrich and are more approachable to relate to spiritual teachers in general as Klingsohr emits such an ethereal glow. The portrayal of the teachers helped take the genre of the novel to unprecedented heights as a new, progressive relationship of order and chaos reflecting life. Both in form and content, the romantic novel strives to emphasize the incomplete phase of life in the hopes of completion after death. Remaining a fragment, Heinrich von Ofterdingen synthesizes

[21] This is a commonly told story. It, and others similar, can be found in a collection of teaching parables edited by Christina Feldman and Jack Kornfield Stories of the Spirit, Stories of the Heart (New York:

poetry, prose, dreams and fairy tales to the point of realization that this is the novel's penultimate stage of perfection, which is when it becomes a fairy tale. The novel itself typifies a life as book (2, 599) which examines human existence beyond a general and surface level. However, whether Heinrich ever gains psychological maturity is debatable and though we are led to infer maturation, the reader never witnesses Heinrich's metamorphosis into the spirit of true poetry. A letter to his friend Ludwig Tieck on 23. Feb 1800 foretells of spiritual transformation: "Das Ganze soll eine Apothesose der Poësie seyn. Heinrich von Afterdingen wird im 1sten Theile zum Dichter reif und im zweyten, als Dichter verklärt" (4, 322). The novel, in fact, reads as a mosaic; lacking structure and removed from any feasible relevance for the reality of the world it fuses—not suspends—time and space. Other terminology employed is the 'romance', which is the medieval tale of fantastic, love which the romantic ideal of a novel coincides as is the arabesque. The whole philosophy of the novel as fusing (con-fusing) forms and contents indeed allows for a synthesis of opposites under the auspice of poetic license.

Stopping in at a guest-house one evening, the omniscient narrator describes the scene of the locals and travelers conversing at their tables, then focuses in on a gentlemen "in fremder Tracht" encircled by an attentive audience. To his spellbound listeners, the miner emphasizes that it was following his childhood curiosity—to see firsthand what "seltne, geheimnisvolle Kunst" (1, 241) was inside the mountain—which masterfully evolved into his living his own dream. The hermit later reaffirms

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Harper, 1991).

this romantic ideal that he also had the premonition since youth that he was following his destiny. The narrator stresses the miner's childlike exuberance for the wonders of the world. Perhaps drawn to the miner's childlike manner, Heinrich senses that the elder garners deep insights. The wise miner, a replica of ancient masters who lived ascetically devoted to their artistry is unmarried, though he does share the idyllic story of being given the master's daughter as wife. This highly autobiographical novel may well portray Novalis as he sees himself as he ripens in age and relives his youth through stories.

Of the congregation, only Heinrich appears visibly fascinated by the miner. The business associates preoccupy themselves devising a plan on how to make the miner most useful for them. The miner, "ein Mann aus der alten Zeit" (1, 243) leads the group of businessmen, farmers, Heinrich and curious onlookers to a nearby cave, which they intend to penetrate for the first time since as yet, no one had dared tempt the superstitions voiced by members of the community. "Die edle Kunst des Bergbaus" (1, 246) is latently representative of the mysterious aura given romantic search for the inner self; the miner, physically distanced from the tumultuous world above, spends his blackened days alone exploring the inner earth and searching for the pure gold. Kristen Pfefferkorn's tightly argued book entitled Novalis: A Romantic's Theory of Language and Poetry notes, among others, that the earth is a fitting symbol of the human as its outer surface veils a hidden inner core, which for most, remains an unexplored mystery. Mining symbolically replicates the poet's aspirations to verbally mine the path inward to the soul. No wonder a mystical interpretation appears so apt,

since both the miner and spiritual seeker trod along dark unfamiliar path blindly trusting God. The cave ushers Heinrich into another reality, and it is coincidentally a song, fusing the highest arts, which greets the curious as the first living sign.

The cave symbolizes the journey, but gives clues also to the direction of the journey. Feilchenfeld designates the cave as a grave: "Der Bergmann führt Heinrich in die Gruft der Vergangenheit" (61). The cave buries past treasures, or treasures the truth-containing past.[22] It is hardly permissible to overlook the symbolic gesture that the miner uses bones, which he surmises to be "Überbleibsel einer uralten Zeit" (1, 253) to chart their return. As an art reconnecting us with our past, mining furthermore typifies the search home, which in psychoanalytic circles relates an unconscious desire to return to the security and warmth of the womb. Star-gazing (as does the hermit), on the other hand, looks into the future as Feilchenfeld suggests.[23]

Following the sounds of singing, the miner leads Heinrich to the source of his next training, namely the hermit. The cave, in which his wife lies buried, shelters a hermit who spends the time, which is at points absent from his consciousness, in solitude with his books. Though he speaks of an active past, the hermit has resolved to spend his remaining years in isolation. Heinrich and the hermit immediately take liking to each other, and the latter allows the young seeker to connect with a book. I find it surprising, that whereas interpretations to the Geistliche Lieder and Hymnen an

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[22] Walter Benjamin includes his ideas on the angel of history, who, though facing the future, looks back on the pile of rubble which is history.

[23]Though he was deeply confined in his dark cave, the hermit advises we always keep our eyes on heaven, suggesting that he had not lost sight of the heaven within him.

die Nacht as well as Klingsohr's fairy tale abound, so few satisfactory readings of this pivotal fifth chapter are available. Indeed, the wise teachers are most often overlooked save for mention of the provincial book, which is of course of importance as it reinforces the medieval setting of the Troubadours. Hiebel devotes half a page to the cave story, stressing the relationship of the hermit to his there buried wife which has been graced by a "göttliche Erleuchtung" (321). Hiebel interprets: "es ist ein Seelenzustand, den Heinrich nun von außen im Einsiedler erkennen lernen muß, weil er ihn selbst später im eigensten Innern erfahren soll" (321). Hiebel finds that the book is meant solely for Heinrich. Fittingly, the provincial book finds its origins in heavenly Jerusalem, to where Heinrich was to return if there were a conclusion. Feilchenfeld offers a much more satisfactory observation than Hiebel in his interpretation of the book; it is an open book representing the core identity of a poet, so that whichever poet where to look at it, at various times and places, would see reflection of what he is at that time. The romantic theory of reading, that we read with the inner sense since the letter itself is dead, supports the idea that each reader of the novel would in turn identify with the unfolding story. Feilchenfeld alludes here to the fact that the image of the book comes from Böhme who writes: "Du mußt dein eigen Buch, das du selber bist, lesen lernen, so wirst du aller Bilder los, und siehest die Stätte, welche heißet: Hier ist der Herr" (in Feilchenfeld 12).[24] In Feilchenfeld's interpretation, the provincial book bears semblance to the meditative mind for the mystic; a mirror, the mind reflects the essence of what is there as it is, i.e., with no

[24] Compare the nature-mystical idea found in Angelus Silesius: "Creation is a book, and who knows how to read/ shall find his sovereign Lord clearly in it revealed" (108).

commentary. For Heinrich, however, the book reflects what the subject sees; memories, reflections and desires. The mystical goal, as Böhme's citation suggests, is that one's own face must be completely pure so as to enable it to reflect the infinite without distortion. Feilchenfeld continues his observations of the book:

> Es (das Buch) handelt scheinbar von einem fremden Dichter. In Wirklichkeit aber sind die Schicksale aller wahren Dichter identisch miteinander, nur durch das Medium der Zeitlichkeit in den Schein einer Vielheit zerlegt. Es ist immer derselbe Dichter, der von jeher auf Erden gewandelt ist, in alle Zukunft wandeln wird. In Vergangenheit und Zukunft findet Heinrich sich selbst wieder, er hat unzählig oft gelebt, ist ungezählte Male gestorben. (61-2)[25]

Much like the soul, the poet appears in multiple forms over the ages proving Heinrich, Novalis and Klingsohr are one and the same spirit. The forms, however, can change. As Kuzniar suggests, Heinrich is Novalis' prototype of "constant mutability of the self— its ever hovering nonidentity" (81). The romantic aversion to form and stability in hopes of displaying freedom inhibits genuine development. A very similar vein of thought is what Novalis writes in respect to fairy tales; that they are closer to the truth than any chronicle of history because poets have access to truths which have governed mankind for generations, but none other than poets and artists can assess.

The miner and the hermit prepare Heinrich to evolve on his romantic journey. By the time he reaches Klingsohr, he is open to not only accept and understand the fairy tale, but make it his own. Emerging from the bright lights of the party inside,

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[25] Briefly mentioned in the first chapter, the theosophical viewpoint as offered by Faivre includes a brief statement to the importance of deciphering hieroglyphs, much like that facing Heinrich. The statement in full reads: "Pansophy [as related to theosophy] refers to the knowledge of divine things that is acquired by deciphering the 'signatures' or hieroglyphs, of the concrete universe, conceived of as the 'book' of nature. This 'book' aids one's understanding of scripture and of God himself"(Faivre 466). Hieroglyphs and myths are basically considered primitive forms of communication, perhaps inadvertently again supporting a regressive stance. Fichte sees that man's first language is hieroglyphics, a visual medium linked to the imagination.

Novalis' grandfather does not immediately recognize his daughter and grandson, who have here reached the destination of their travels. I think it is important, in light of the practice for a student to choose his or her teacher, that Heinrich first notices a man whom he believes to have seen pictured in the magical book. It is he, Klingsohr, who will teach the aspiring poet in his art so that he may then carry on the tradition. The ensuing conversations, set within the perimeters of a park, bubble with insightful observations and hopes about the wonders of life and the art of poetry. Klingsohr, whom Heinrich addresses as father, can only be said to give life to some mystical insights on the level of nature mysticism. Take, for instance, the sincerity of the following assertion that "die beste Poesie liegt uns ganz nahe, und ein gewöhnlicher Gegenstand ist nicht selten ihr liebster Stoff" (1, 286). True poetry, it can be inferred, is from the heart and loses sincerity when ornamented. Klingsohr tries to minimize the importance or grandiosity of 'being' a poet, believing instead that to poetize is to live centered on the basic force within each of us. Heinrich, on the other hand, extends his exuberance at controlling words to want to control the world around him, a feat he finds is possible in words. Klingsohr believes in fairy tales, and in this manner, vividly depicts the envisioned Golden Age all lovers and poets, usually one and the same, are called to share.

The fairy tale is romanticism par excellence:

> In einem ächten Märchen muß alles wunderbar—geheimnißvoll und unzusammenhängend seyn—alles belebt. Jedes auf eine andre Art. Die ganze Natur muß auf eine wunderliche Art mit der ganzen Geisterwelt vermischt seyn... Diese Zeit vor der Welt liefert gleichsam die zerstreuten Züge der *Zeit nach der Welt*— wie der Naturstand ein *sonderbares Bild* des ewigen Reichs ist. (3, 280-1)

Comprising the ninth chapter of Heinrich von Ofterdingen, Klingsohr's fairy tale, told shortly after the young pair promises each other love and marriage, revisits common themes already introduced in the "Atlantis Märchen". Hiebel interprets the tale to be a song about the Golden Age—its passing and its return in which love and poetry (Eros and Fabel) rule (312). I find this tale convincing for a belief in the return of a golden age; one which parallels Eden but features poets—those who move freely in the poetical realm—as the cohabiting dwellers. The spirit moving about them, as the tale foresees, will be the spirit of poetry. This world suffers because *it has separated two indivisible energies*; poetry and love. Only in poets have these traits been naturally perfected, and so when Fabel and Eros have rejoined, a new poetical space will form to welcome poets and their dreams. Wernaer somewhat whimsically points out that the Golden Age of the romantic's dreams was not along the lines of a sinless, ethical and moral core, but "an enthusiastic dream of a life hereafter in which love and poetry reign" (281). Words remain even more prominent than love: "Das wird die goldne Zeit seyn, wenn alle Worte—*Figurenworte*—Mythen—und alle Figuren—Sprachfiguren—Hieroglyfen seyn—wenn man Figuren sprechen und schreiben—und Worte vollkommen plastisiren, und Musiciren lernt" (3 123-4).

The characters, each symbolic in mythological and spiritual romantic principles, interact between their worlds and depict a woven path to final fulfillment.[26]

[26] Hiebel employs many diagrams to support his reading of Novalis. Page 327 features a semi circular sketch of the four different world the thirteen figures traverse. He finds motives of the tale as 'Naturmythe' to 'dichterische Sublimierung des Sophien-Erlebniss" (326).

Eros' parents project some similarities to Novalis' own, as his father much like the Schreiber, takes the rational role, save for his relenting to his family's begging to recall a youthful dream. The mother extends encouragement. It is Fabel and Eros who set out, at Sophie's encouragement, to wander through the world in their pursuit of finding and King Arctur and the princess Freyda, who is no doubt a variation of the northern European goddess of sexual love while she stands also for peace. Together, the two forms magically worked romantic ideals into the communities they passed until they returned to be blessed by the mother. As Wernaer sees it, the new romantic age consists under the leadership of an "Olympus of entirely new gods" (208):

> Thus we have, in the newly established realm of romantic power, Love and Peace as royal ruler, Imagination and Artistic Sense as their representatives on earth; Poetry on the outstretched wings of immortality; and, in the temple of heaven, as spiritual rulers forever, the King and his wife Sophia. (208)

The noticeable absence of Christian influences in this ideal world, faithfully modeled after the biblical one is actually not surprising, being that for the romantic spirit, what is written is of less importance than what one sees written in it. Novalis' ambiguity towards religion, in this sense traditional religious teaching of his professed Protestant faith have led to questions about his religiosity. Henrik Steffens writes: "In der That war Novalis im tiefsten Sinne Christ und religiös. Es ist bekannt, daß Lieder von ihm herrühren, die zu den herrlichtsten gehören, welche die christliche Kirche kennt" (4, 640-1). O'Brian and Hellerich, whose books were both published in 1995, were some of the first to question the upheld opinion of Novalis' devoted Christianity. Both scholars have contributed much needed speculation of the unquestioned religiosity of Novalis and the young romantics in general. In short, Hellerich's

opinion is that religious piety was primarily for appearance sake and not true belief in Christian faith. Perhaps even to the extent that Novalis' beliefs were fabricated by admirers to better have him fit society. While O'Brian considers that Novalis' ideas on religion evolved over time, "it always maintains its irreligion" (218).[27] He maintains a speculative stance, believing that Novalis appears to be working with orthodox Christian theology, yet is in fact subversively injecting his own 'romantic religion'. This becomes especially problematical when some of Novalis' fragments are included. "Von Gott nur recht einfach, menschlich und romantisch gesprochen" (3, 654) when in the next line he emphasizes his stance that the everyday things are to be romanticized, in that even everyday business dealings one should handle poetically. Other strains of religious views find that religion is a synthesis of feeling and thought, or sometimes as poetry and philosophy. Elsewhere religion is seen as part belief and part reason or an observation that God is boring, which underscores the idea that romantic thought must by definition never cease longing, never be fulfilled. The predominant religious view of God, Novalis finds, is too monotone and he suggests our idea of Jesus ought to be individual and experiential (Novalis finds these characteristic pantheistic), not the usual boring 'other: "Wie vermeidet man bei Darstellung des Vollkommenen die Langeweile?" (3, 435). To this expression Mähl offers the following opinion, which he introduces as similarly being expressed by Herder and Kant who both warned of complete surrender to God:

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[27] The following title caught my eye one day while browsing the library stacks: The Gospel of Irreligious Religion: Insights for Uprooted Man from Major Wold Faiths by Lowell D. Streiker. As has been stated before, part of the difficulty in assessing 'religiousity' is that mystical tendencies have traditionally been steered clear of mainstream religion and thereby some misunderstanding can ensue.

> Dieses Ungenügen an einer absoluten Vollkommenheit (als indifferenter Einheit, wie sie der Mystiker sucht), dieses Empfinden ihrer 'Eintönigkeit' entspricht der romantischen Sehnsucht nach einer höheren, gebildeten Einheit, die das Mannigfaltige, den Reichtum an Individuellem vereinigt, ohne ihn aufzulösen oder zu vernichten—die den Entfaltungsprozeß der Geschichte nicht rückgänging macht. (Die Idee 307)

The enigma of Sophie will be addressed in the following chapter, though mention of her as Novalis' sole inspiration, "das Heilige, Unbekannte" (3, 672) gives known that while he may acknowledge the work of God in her, she is lastly his object of desire. She is what Novalis wants to become, and as Faber points out, this insight initially awakened his desire to become a poet (21). Novalis is set to found his own religion, much like the belief today (very American), to find an eclectic mix of spirituality which matches one's needs. Novalis's Christianity, as recent literature asserts, was dubious at best; his poetical insights magical and all-inclusive, perhaps in the more general sense of catholic. If poetry was the religion he lived by, I would also add that Novalis truly poeticizes Christianity. By example of his idea that love and poetry were once together, then separated by humanity, and must again come together simply replaces biblical figures with romantic ones. The depicted Golden Age, was not of one world, but more importantly unified the carnal pleasures dominating the lower world of Ginnistan, the writer and the world into which the children were born, with the ethereal reign of the kingdom, with that of the underworld. So in this sense, the paradise of his youth, and that of the world, constituted that of which he dreamed of for eternity.[28]

[28] Interestingly enough, the only character in the tale to die in order to live is the mother.

The Berliner Papiere foretell some ideas with which Novalis toyed for inclusion in his novel. Among them, is interestingly enough, that Heinrich would find himself not in Tunis, but in Jerusalem. There, the Christians and heathens would reconcile and have discussions with the dead. Not surprisingly, "das ganze Menschengeschlecht wird am Ende poëtisch. Neue goldne Zeit. Poëtisirter Idealism" (3, 677). The sketches foresee that the eternal poet, in form of Klingsohr—artist—poets—Novalis will never die. "Der vollendete Mensch muß gleichsam zugleich an mehreren Orten und in mehreren Menschen leben" (3, 560).

Grouped together in the collected works, the Hymns and the Spiritual Songs read as though someone were experimenting with catechism material. The diverse interpretations of these works leave few possibilities of intention uncovered. Although O'Brian declares, in essence, that Novalis should not be given a Christian reading, or more specifically, one in which all the references are linked to Christianity, this may be a bit extreme given the poet's manifold reflections about religion. Well versed in the terminology and beliefs of the Catholic faith, Novalis immediately devoured, for instance, Schleiermacher's Protestant talks on religion claiming that diversity of religion is its nature. If Novalis was convinced of Catholicism's dogma, on the other hand, remains doubtful, a viewpoint both O'Brian and Hellerich maintain to frame their thesis. Catholicism's traditional rites, its mythological basis and roots from the east, the use of icons (especially linked to Byzantine spirituality), as well as the reverent artwork celebrating biblical scenes and the hope of redemption in the afterworld to come undoubtedly held the young dreamy novelist in awe. Yet I applaud

Hellerich's valiant position to validate that religious fervor was not all that was on Novalis' mind while busy writing his spiritual songs. Hellerich opines that the spiritual songs are mutable, meaning that they conform to the needs of whichever denomination is hoping to make use of them, or even that they were free of dogma. The bland poetic structure offers but a vestige of denominational flavor leaving Hellerich to question to what extent Novalis subscribed to the Christian faith:

> The cardinal question as to Novalis' view of Christianity in these songs has resulted in a host of different and contradictory conclusions. This has, beyond a shadow of a doubt, been the aim of the quibbler, who wanted to be all things to all men in order to win as many followers as possible for his new religion. (87)

A more recent approach by Rosen (Romantic Poets, Critics and other Madmen) likewise ridicules those who render a religious reading to the romantic period, which he finds to be "a profoundly secularizing movement" (176). Though its authors partook of older forms they were immediately given an aesthetic makeover to conform to the romantic image.[29]

The addressee of the opening questions to Geistliche Lieder, "Was wär ich ohne dich gewesen?/ Was würd' ich ohne dich nicht sein?" remain ambiguously unspecified until the third stanza reveals Christ: "Hat Christus sich mir kundgegeben,/ Und bin ich seiner erst gewiß/ Wie schnell verzehrt ein lichtes Leben/ Die bodenlose Finsternis" (1, 159). The spiritual songs beg to be read as devotional hymns. However, pure intentions remain elusive, since Novalis' image of Christ is fused with

[29] I agree with much of Rosen's study as the romantic period de facto bearing madmen. He writes about the "hyperbolic language of mysticism" (50) in romantic language and if Rosen finds 'mystical' as descriptive of the romantics, as I believe he does, then he does, in essence, show a comparison on the linguistic level.

not only Sophie but also nature and himself. In the fourth hymn, the speaker confesses that his heart now knows who has died for us. Novalis reaffirms the intense attachment to the death of his beloved, be that either Christ or Sophie:

> Meine Welt war mir zerbrochen,
> Wie von einem Wurm gestochen
> Welkte Herz und Blüte mir;
> Meines Lebens ganze Habe,
> Jeder Wunsch lag mir im Grabe,
> Und zur Qual war ich noch hier. (1, 164)

The poet wallows in his misery of having been forgotten—until suddenly a vision appears to him which in removing the grave's stone opens his innermost self.[30] The concluding verse superimposes a Sophia resurrection over that of Christ, but since Novalis does not specify, the possibility exists that the author sees himself as a Christ figure resurrecting with Sophia:

> Wen ich sah, und wen an seiner
> Hand erblickte, frage keiner,
> Ewig werd' ich dies nur sehn;
> Und von allen Lebensstunden
> Wird nur die wie meine Wunden
> Ewig heiter, offen stehn. (1, 164)

As demonstrated by only this one example, Novalis' figures are not rooted in particulars freeing the author to help himself to interchangeable floating images that fuse boundaries. As previously mentioned, this fact allows 'made to order' versions for songwriters, such as Schubert, who offers only one of many renditions of the fifth

[30] Hiebel could not resist tying this idea in with the mystic: "Das Wegheben des Steines ist ein äußeres und inneres Geschehnis: für den Mystiker ist es das Symbol der Erweckung— *und mein Innres aufgetan*" (267).

hymn.[31] Novalis' romantic ideas poetized whatever came before him, whether sacred or other. As demonstrated in this chapter by the idea of Paradise as romantic home, though union was envisioned, it was never fully experienced and remained as ideal in the fragmented romantic imagination. I find it appropriately ironic that the ideal dissolves as it materializes and hence is doomed to remain but a dream. The romantic symbol is the blue flower par excellence. Blue dissolves as you look at it, as the aforementioned romantic flower so often does in its literary mention. The color blue epitomizes moreover the central theme of longing (*Sehnsucht*) for that which they deem never attainable. The blue flower's essences, most noticeable while dreaming, waft through Heinrich von Ofterdingen:

> Eine Art von süßem Schlummer befiel ihn, in welchem er unbeschreibliche Begebenheiten träumte, und woraus ihn eine andere Erleuchtung weckte.
> Er fand sich auf einem weiten Rasen am Rande einer *Quelle*, die in die Luft hinaus quoll und sich darin zu verzehren schien. *Dunkelblaue* Felsen mit bunten Adern erhoben sich in einiger Entfernung; das Tageslicht, das ihn umgab,war heller und milder als gewöhnlich, der *Himmel* war *schwarzblau* und völlig rein. Was ihn aber mit voller Macht anzog, war eine hohe *lichtblaue* Blume, die zunächst an der Quelle stand und ihn mit ihre breiten, glänzenden Blättern berührte...Er sah nichts als die *blaue Blume* und betrahtete sie lange mit unnennbarer Zärtlichkeit. Endlich wollte er sich ihr nähern, als sie auf einmal sich zu bewegen und sich zu verändern anfing: die Blätter wurden glänzender und schmiegten sich an den wachsenden Stengel, die Blume neigte sich nach ihm zu, und die Blütenblätter zeigten einen *blauen* augebreiteten Kragen, in welchem ein *zartes Gesicht* schwebte. (emphasis added 1, 197)

This prototypical romantic metaphor turns inward to subjectively focus on the self and its relation to love and nature. As Ingrid Riedel points out in Farben in Religion, Gesellschaft, Kunst und Psychotherapie, the color blue is most often

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[31] Details of the changes made to the songs can be found in most scholarly apparatus dealing with the hymns extensively. Hellerich and others have included arguments on the extent of use of other material on which to base songs, especially the words of Böhme and previously existent hymns.

associated with vast openness of heaven and the depth of water.[32] It is of interest to note a comment made by F. Schlegel that the beginnings of all wisdom can be found in water, water being not only blue, but representing the unconscious, as does the miner's cave in which Heinrich meets the sage. Riedel continues: "Das Blau bringt mit sich etwas Geheimnisvolles, man fühlt sich leicht und träumerisch gestimmt; sehnsüchtig, melancholisch, ruhig, träumerisch" (51). Blue is further considered an introverted, contemplative and introspective color. Riedel cites Goethe's remarks that blue affects the onlooker with softness and sensitive longing.[33] It is, in the most truly romantic sense, the color of the unknown and the magical. If Schelling was basing most of his transcendental philosophy on a feeling of the Sublime (whatever form this may tactically take on), the difficulty found in giving these metaphysical ideas appropriate words could only be suggested as the longing for the infinite. According to romantic philosophy, longing for the infinite is the highest sense available to humans and sets them apart from other related species.

To include an exotic consideration to the romantic longing for blue, the eastern *chacra* color scheme identifies the fifth *chacra*, that of the throat, as sky blue. The fifth level seats self-expression and creativity whose dominant sense, fittingly enough, is hearing (the highest of the senses as the remaining two *chacras* are no longer associated with a sense) and whose element is ether. Not surprising, then, that poets believed that ether flowed through their veins. The sixth *chacra*, the color indigo, is

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[32]"Himmlisches Leben im blauen Gewande..." (1, 409). In Christian symbolism, and as is perpetuated in Novalis, the color blue is associated with the Virgin Mary. In India, icons of the Buddha often show him with blue hair. An outstanding example attest to romantic subjective reading, however beautifully simple and reverent the following verse is: "Ich sehe dich in tausend Bildern,/Maria lieblich ausgedrückt,/ Doch keins von allen kann dich schildern,/ Wie meine Seele dich erblickt" (Geistliche Lieder 1, 177).

[33]Wouldn't be surprised that were Heine writing today, he would include the following observation: "Nach Lüschers Beobachtungen steigert sich das Bedürfnis nach Blau bei Erschöpfung und Erkrankung" (Riedel 51-2)!

found in the brow center and facilitates paranormal powers. Related illness to an unbalanced higher-level *chacra* includes exhibiting obsessive and ecstatic emotions. Indigo leads to violet, which is the color of the Buddhist lotus flower!

In Heinrich von Ofterdingen, Mathilde is addressed as a blue sapphire: "Liebe Mathilde, ich möchte Euch einen köstlichen lautern Saphir nennen" (1, 280). Hildegard von Bingen was similarly drawn to blue, and her vision of the compassionate Jesus is of the man in sapphire blue. In Hildegard's color scheme, blue, not white, was the transfiguration of all colors.

The color blue links us also to the metaphor of the veil. Between our selves and our consciousness hangs a veil, what Blake sees as the doors of perception, densely drawn for most normal everyday consciousness. In moments of inspiration, artists and poets find an almost translucent, or certainly permeable veil, which funnels energy from their center. Biblical tales as well as entertaining fairy tales leave no doubt as to the curiosity of humans who seem magically attracted to the hidden, and moreover, the forbidden. As the perceptive Evelyn Underhill writes, "all men, at one time or another, have fallen in love with the veiled Isis whom they call Truth..." (Mysticism 3). Where in Schiller's version what is found behind the Isis veil is left to the imagination, Novalis' rendition finds—surprise—one's self.[34] The tale of Rosenbluthe and Hyazinth included in Die Lehrlinge similarly depicts Hyazinth lifting a veil to reveal his beloved Rosenblütchen. Pfefferkorn points out that the veil draws attention to that which it conceals (125) and so we must be guided not only to the veil, but to that which is underneath. An alternative view is to see that the veil is on

[34]"Einem gelang es— er hob den Schleier der Göttin zu Sais— Aber was sah er? er sah—Wunder des Wunders— Sich selbst". The Isis figure characterized in Schiller symbolizes truth as the universal spirit.

ourselves, not the other. The false self would prove such a veil, for upon lifting it, we would find our true self as it is in paradise.

The flower is a self-constructed object, not an independent entity. The blue flower exhibits an enticing narcissistic beauty, since the flower represents lastly, Novalis himself.[35] The feminine qualities which project the likeness of a female face into the flower can for one, certainly be seen as Mathhilde, as Sophie or any female, but also Novalis with his definite feminine features as his circulated portrait suggests. He falls for the flower's enchanting beauty and enticing aroma, which promises to lead him not only to himself but therein to all beginning. In flowers we can connect with youth, since as Heinrich reflects "Blumen [sind] die Ebenbilder der Kinder" (1, 329). Flowers, after all, and here we see that he is speaking of budding flowers, hold all the magic of life already within them—and we see it packaged together in its prime:

> Den vollen Reichtum des unendlichen Lebens, die gewaltigen Mächte der spätern Zeit, die Herrlichkeit des Weltendes und die goldne Zukunft aller Dinge sehn wir hier noch innig ineinander geschlungen, aber doch auf das deutlichste und klarste in zarter Verjüngung. (1, 329)

After these thoughts, Heinrich gazes upon the clouds, which he sees as exemplary of the second, higher childhood of paradise regained. As his romantic imagination sees it, the clouds benevolently rain down nourishment on the flowers in all their true and imagined beauty.

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[35] In the notes as to how the second part of the novel was to conclude, Novalis writes about Heinrich's transfiguration; that Heinrich (who has since fathered a child with Mathilde) turns into stone as he plucks the blue flower. Edda (an oriental *Hirtenmäddchen*) offers herself and he turns into a tree, which she subsequently fells and burns. At this point Heinrich transforms into a golden ram to later be sacrificed in order to become man again. During this whole process Heinrich hears fantastic tales. This is a mature take on mythological ideas of self-sacrifice to live anew. It would be interesting to pursue this aspect of the novel further in comparison with the mystical death of the false self.

The paradisiacal Golden Age swayed as a glorified place of freedom in which no moral restraints or classical imposition of form inhibited the laws of nature. Ken Wilber takes issue with the idealized version of paradise as conjured up by the Romantics:

> To find a purer reality, a truer self, a more genuine feeling, and a fairer community, we must get back prior to the Crime of Culture and rediscover a historical past in which this Crime had not occurred. And once we find this Paradise Lost, we must, as a social agenda, make it the Promised Land by reverting to or incorporating the original, primal, pristine way of life into the modern world. (Brief History 289)

In Eye of Spirit, Wilber finds that romantic belief catered to the idea that infants are born into unconscious union, disrupted with the onslaught of reason which however, romantic consciousness could forsake to return to conscious union—the same primordial state revisited. In other words, romantic consciousness recaptures the initial ground on a higher level, much like the elevationist seeks to interpret higher functions into lower levels. Novalis indicates that on the level of creative artist, he tasted paradise, yet it was forever to remain a distant ideal. His circling on the level of desire may partly be due to his colleague F. Schlegel, who was only one of the philosophers to write specifically that the ideal can never be realized. The symbol of the blue flower surrenders to an impressive gamut of interpretations, and it may well represent any romantic ideal, although the flower decidedly represents the union of the Golden Age. Something always intercepts Novalis' characters from experiencing its fullness; had Mathilde not been taken away from Heinrich, for instance, he may have experienced the poetical kingdom here on earth. As projected into the blue flower, the

promised Kingdom must forever evade him, no matter how longingly and sensually he sees, tastes, hears, smells and touches the object of his desire.

Novalis believed in mosaics, in fragments and unfinished symphonies; and we find the following words stating that the goal of man is not the Golden Age:

> Die Welt wird dem Lebenden immer unendlicher—drum *kann nie* ein Ende der Verknüpfung des Mannichfaltigen, *ein Zustand der Unthätigkeit für das denkende Ich kommen*—Es können goldne Zeiten erscheinen—aber sie bringen nicht das Ende der Dinge—das Ziel des Menschen ist nicht die goldne Zeit—Er soll ewig existiren und ein schön geordnetes Individuum seyn und verharren—dis ist die Tendenz seiner Natur. (2, 269)[36]

The statement confirms Novalis' underlying belief that his search will never end, can never end, in this life. It is the best man can do to continue focusing on that which is beyond.

For the romantic, home remains as elusive as the blue flower. The outline of Klingsohr's world suggests that Heinrich remains in the poetical sphere, and does not return to his place of origin. The sketches show Heinrich journeying east through Jerusalem to then return home, to the west. The various spiritual paths find that though the goal of unity consciousness remains comparable, the paths are manifold. The teacher in Lehrlinge wants students to find their own way to the same home, a common mystical teaching that while the paths have been set out, one must still find one's own way. As the apprentice reveals: Vielmehr will er [Lehrer], daß wir den eignen Weg verfolgen, weil jeder neue Weg durch neue Länder geht, und jeder endlich zu diesen Wohnungen, zu dieser heiligen Heimat wieder führet" (1, 82). This

[36] Emphasis added. In order to progress on the spiritual journey, we must be willing to suspend thinking.

paragraph concludes with the concern that one must learn to want to lift the veil; ignorance thereof denotes being uninitiated to the higher realms of life.

To portray spiritual paths, Wilber frequently resorts to the analogy of waves in the ocean; if the waves represent different approaches, it is possible to pick and choose, enter and disembark while riding a wave. Unity consciousness is the ocean itself though and one must eventually fall off the wave to fully experience it, for it is in unity consciousness that the great mystery enters in its full realization of the present experience (No Boundary 141-43).

As warrants repeating, the mystical understanding of heaven is a state of union, not the culmination of all the so-called good virtues at the extermination of all bad. It is unnatural to have solely the good, true and beautiful; focusing on only these polarities does not cause the opposites to disappear. Union presupposes the disintegration of seeing differences. Wholeness is a total element, and to borrow Wilber's metaphor, a wave has both crest and trough—the crest part of the wave exists in balancing harmony with the trough. Until paradise is experienced as our true reality, we suffer hell. In Lacanian, as in Buddhist terms, we spend our life in pursuit and striving to overcome our lack. Rather than travel the difficult path, I am tempted to pose the following romantic alternative: resurrect the original paradise in our minds, imagining in creative language the framework to make the impossible possible. Why need we traverse difficult roads when the better world lies within?

Novalis himself never ripened beyond the budding potential of his flower. In his narcissistic glorification of childhood, Novalis sums up the essence of his own

mystical awakening to correspond with that of youth: "MENSCHENL[EHRE]. Die Kindheit ist der Erwachsenheit entgegengesetzt—Blüthe und Frucht—Frühling und Herbst" (3, 260). But rather than see the progressive unfolding of maturity, Novalis believes we are given everything at birth, and must therefore at that time, already be the ideal, from which we depart with every passing day. But Novalis consoles himself with the idea that there is always something loved, which is the center of paradise: "Jeder geliebte Gegenstand ist der Mittelpunkt eines Paradises" (2, 433). To his most prized memory we turn to in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5
SELF-CONSTRUCTING LOVE: ROMANTIC VERSUS MYSTIC

The Beloved is all in all; the lover merely veils Him;
The Beloved is all that lives; the lover a dead thing.
Rumi

Nur die Liebe besitzt den Talisman ewigen Friedens—
Da nur, wo sie erscheint, fließen die Massen in eins.
(1, 401)

Our response to the question 'who am I' defines the self as we identify with it. Among the somber literary figures toiling towards self-fulfillment, whether Parzival's quest of the holy grail or Faust's intellectual strivings, there flutters the comical figure of Papageno, the flighty protagonist of Mozart's opera The Magic Flute. The rather naïve and presumably unlearned—and perhaps therefore so refreshingly innocent—Papageno searches for his other half to finally feel whole. Papageno recognizes his lack, which he claims would be fulfilled by a female, as pairing seems to keep the birds content! Indeed, the higher powers have already found him a suitable companion, but in order to be worthy of her, the forlorn bird-catcher must be silent and undergo a few trials. In simple, rancorous phrases, Papageno attests to the difficulty of human nature to sacrifice any part of one's self even if be for greater good. The ego puts up a great resiliency to death, yet the fact that it must undergo cleansing (purgative night) to come to a higher stage of consciousness finds abundant

recourse in myths, legends and fairy tales throughout history. Papageno voices the ego's fears that anything is better than giving up control:

> Papageno: But what are these trials?
> Second Priest: To submit to all our laws, even if you die in the attempt.
> Papageno: I'll stay single.[1]

The fear of death petrifies the ego. Yet Papageno implores the authorities to at least allow him to see this beautiful woman to satisfy his curiosity. The Priest: "See her you may". But on the condition he remain silent. Papageno: "But after I've seen her, then must I die? I'll stay single." This character, bubbling over in delight of life, can for the life of him, not keep his tongue quiet. He represents the struggling journeyer:

> Priest: "Stand up and be a man!"
> Papageno: "But tell me, my lords, why must I go through all this suffering and all these frights? If the gods have already destined Papagena for me, why do I have to go through so much danger to win her?"
> Second Priest: Your own reason should tell you the answer. Come! It's my duty to lead you onwards."

Death is unknown, frightening and terminal to the self as we know it. Papageno seems ill-prepared to comprehend this sense defying enigma: to gain the whole he must lose the part. Biblical words similarly claim that one must die in order to live. We share Papageno's thoughts: can't I just add a half to another half to make it whole? Yet the priests insist that only upon having accepted death (or the possibility of death hence demonstrating detachment from the self) and undergoing trials to prove his faithfulness and obedience to a source other than himself can Papageno be worthy of wholeness. While Papageno expresses the basic human reservations on this paradigm,

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[1] Emanuel Schikaneder The Magic Flute. Trans. Michael Geliot and Anthony Besch. James Steakley, ed., German Opera Libretti (New York: Continuum, 1995). Passages quoted from pages 34-39.

Novalis philosophically distances himself from that stance to see death but a continuation of life: "Leben ist der Anfang des Todes. Das Leben ist um des Todes willen. Der Tod ist Endigung und Anfang zugleich—Scheidung und nähere Selbstverbindung zugleich. Durch den Tod wird die Reduktion vollendet" (2, 416). Echoing religious orthodoxy, Novalis believed that it is in death we begin to live; we live in order to die. Taken to the extreme by superficial interpretation, this life is not worth living. Death becomes a welcome sign of having overcome that problematical lower self, as Novalis finds: "Der Tod ist eine Selbstbesiegung—die, wie alle Selbstbüberwindung, eine neue, leichtere Existenz verschafft" (2, 414).

The most complex, problematical and consequently misunderstood mystical (and psychological) construct is the self. Nineteenth century metaphysical musings on the subject only add to the condition of the previous statement. What could prove more fascinating and familiar, yet simultaneously more frightening and estranged than the self? Novalis' fragments contain numerous philosophical speculations attempting to define the various nuances of self (by way of Fichte for one). The problematical self is noted by names such as false self, small self of ego self, with which we identity.[2] The i versus I point of distinction, or self/ Self deliberation procuring debatable interpretations is actually quite straightforward in mystical teaching, though the execution thereof a bit more demanding! The obliteration of the small self is in essence the goal of the mystical journey, since at this point full union and perfect love prevail. The small self, the personal, ego self (what I do, what I have, what others

[2] The false self as used here should not suggest a conscious superficial and temporary change to behavior or preferences. The false self is our ego identity in contrast to our true self.

think of me)[3] appears separate from the cosmic Self. Psychological language refers to the false self (with its repressed emotions and childhood traumas and desires) as emerging in early childhood and often firmly in place by the age of five. Our society panders greatly to the stability and augmentation of the persona, the 'good' part of our self, and represses shadow elements.

Carl Gustav Jung's insistence on the double (shadow) living in a *relationship* with the self resembles that of the perhaps more familiar permeable configuration of anima and animus visualized in the yin/yang symbol. More than each part making the whole, each part carries within it a segment of the other; yang energy comprises the dark little 'eye' of the white yin and vice versa. In like manner, our psychological makeup reduces the shadow to an inferior function of the self but also as such to exhibit its role as "the door into the unconscious and the gateway of dreams" (Jung Archetypes 123). Though it be the "dark, unlit, and repressed side of the ego complex" (von Franz, cited in Bly A Little 1) the shadow functions as an essential component of the human psyche, yet one of which most people remain blissfully unaware. Transferred onto global scale, evil lurks as the shadow of society and remains as an ever-penetrating force and reminder of our individual and collective inability to incorporate negative energies into reality.[4]

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[3] Basil Pennington. "The Monastic Heritage". Christian Contemplative History: Our Apophatic Tradition. Video set 3. (Snowmass: St. Benedict Monastery, 1994).

[4] The shadow side of our personality, once unleashed, comes out as a greater force one could ever imagine. Weimar Cinema picks up on the romantic fascination for the dark mysterious forces within human nature to produce such screen images as Nosferatu, the Golem, the Student of Prague, and other projections of evil in society for the first time on screen to offer a visual confrontation.

Consequently, individuals carry a contrived notion that the public self engaged in conventional roles, i.e., the good, is who they truly are. On the conscious level, this reality suffices; yet the substantial inner workings unfold unconsciously (most notably in dreams) and open to us on different levels of consciousness. Thus truly getting to know your self is a long and painful process, and transpires by way of the dark side of the personality: "The shadow is a tight passage, a narrow door, *whose painful constriction no one is spared who goes down to the deep well.* But one must learn to know oneself in order to know who one is" (emphasis added, Jung Archetypes 21). The poet Robert Bly, well known for his interpretations of fairy tales and legends, refers to the shadow as the long bag we drag behind us in his book A Little Book on the Human Shadow.[5] The image of the bag is appropriate, as the shadow forms as a collection of traits deemed undesirable. If a five-year old is warned not to show anger, Bly provides as an example, the emotion of anger is then deposited into the bag. All facets of our total self which we have learned carry negative associations are unconsciously bagged up and carried around with us. Subsequently, instinctive energies constitute the base of the bag. In labeling traits, we unfortunately fall prey to the concern voiced by Jung in the passage cited above; by focusing our perspective on only one dimension, we overlook the potential of totality and therefore neglect to affirm the presence of the opposite within what is identified as the negative. The bagged energy, if appropriated wisely, offers a vital source of creative potential. Furthermore, the bag is cumulative, which means that if the expression of sexuality,

[5]Incidentally, Chamisso's man in gray of Peter Schlemihl's Wundersame Geschichte, a figure analogous to Scapinelli, folds up the unsuspecting victim's shadow into a bag.

for instance, which shares creative energy, was bagged in infancy thanks to Freud, the adult attempting to reconnect with this vital energy source in a conscious manner must first sift through the more recent layers. According to Bly: "We spend our life until we're twenty deciding what parts of our self to put into the bag, and we spend the rest of our lives trying to get them out again" (A Little 18). A well-known trope is that individuals disclose the contents of their bag in what they strongly criticize, despise, envy and fear in others. Sadly, most individuals shy away from meeting their self, and so continue to suffer the weight of the bag.

Modern society is programmed to rely solely on self-righteous virtues and skeptical, rational behavior it flaunts. In the quest to trod undefined paths, people are abandoned without anchorage, and are taken up into capitalistic mentality that rewards productivity, specialized interests and independent thinking. Our self, whether we desire to our not, molds to this self-constructed society and makes itself to be important. In fact, the self is our greatest defense against nothingness (that which we truly are if understood that as a mystical construct, nothing is everything). The romantic notion of self suffered under images of grandiosity to the point one can argue that the romantic program for happiness was exploring the uniqueness of the self to its very limits. Likewise, Novalis suggests that the infinite was to be found by stretching all the finite directions to their end: "Die Basis aller ewigen Verbindung ist eine absolute Tendenz nach allen Richtungen (2, 445). For the romantics, diversity was an art; again the unparalleled beauties of natural forms sought to be emulated. One of the greatest insights the self gains when, upon glimpsing another dimension, it realizes its

own limitations, is that the self, built up under pretences of being unique, special and all powerful is really nothing in relation to the universe. Is our doing really of any great importance in this vast cosmos? Rather than catering to ideas of each persona being special, Buddhists, for example, teach equanimity as does the biblical parable of the field workers. A farmer using hired hands to sow his field paid equal wage to each worker, even though some toiled eight hours in scorching sun while others came only to join in the last two hours. The master comments that each received their fair share as each had agreed to work for the reward promised. Not equality, which our society sees as fair practice, but equanimity: responding to each need as it arises, a practice requiring flexibility.

A momentary glimpse illuminating a greater reality outside of the self is often an initial invitation to find meaning outside the self-boundary. It is within every human's capacity to experience the importance, or true reality, of the small self dissipate at the realization that it is but an illusion, a self-imposed construct of the limiting rational mind which as it is finally completely deconstructed, reveals our original being. Before the process of detachment can begin, the false self must be known and accepted, possible only if the individual knows his or her persona and shadow.

More specifically, this chapter pertains to the self as the ego-self. The concept of immortality in relation to the finite self, while not universally accepted, is generally given theoretical concession which has led to numerous variations on the theme of self. German philosophers marked the field to theorize on variations of the self with

transcendental ego (Kant), pure I (Fichte) and absolute (Schelling) to name but a few who link the transcendental self with the soul. Without going into the philosophical and theological detail necessary to present a fair case of the soul, it suffices for the intentions at hand to accept Eckhart's teaching that the soul is the divine spark within us. St. Theresa identifies the soul as the interior castle with numerous chambers of escalating degrees leading to our innermost chamber or ground of being. The soul is that which exists universally to breath life into every being, the beatific center encapsulated by the false self (ego-self). As Louis Dupré confirms in his article "The Mystical Experience of the Self and Its Philosophical Significance," the soul is a religious concept particularly venerated in native cultures (152).

Eighteenth century Germany was fascinated with ideas of the beautiful soul, (schöne Seele) Schelling's *Weltseele,* and the belief that the soul leads home, or leads to God. Eichendorff's poem "Mondnacht" images the soul as a dove, not uncommon in religious symbolism. Much like the word mysticism, the perception of the soul has adopted a more secular angle with age to take on emotional content. Nalbantian for example, identifies the soul as housing the characteristic element of longing of the German idealists (5). The author continues that "often soul and imagination are interchangeable, and the soul is as easily identified with Romanticism as is the imagination" (8).

Ontogeny of the Self

As Wilber has so vividly and artistically demonstrated in the complementary editions Atman Project and Up From Eden, the evolution of human development corresponds with human evolution. The Atman Project serves as an in-depth presentation of the ontological development of human nature and human consciousness from the pre-personal stage of the new-born uroboric (serpentine) stage, as it develops a body ego self in the typhonic stage (half human, half serpent) at which point the infant begins to distinguish his or her body from the surrounding world to which it was prior 'unified'. The ego becomes clearly formed in the mental-egoic realms which emerges at the earliest at around four years of age until the crucial late ego development from twelve to twenty-one. The names Erikson, Piaget, Freud and Loevinger allude to only the most familiar developmental psychologists and theorists on whose work Wilber bases his presentation of the first five levels of consciousness.

Up From Eden traces the historical development of the person to correlate with the development of cultural worldview. In ascending order are the archaic, magic, mythic, mental, and centaur levels running parallel to foraging, horticultural, agrarian, industrial and informational worldviews respectively (roughly fulcrums 1-5). Each phase or level expands organically from its predecessor and as is the nature of holons, includes and transcends the prior. In similar language, Bede Griffiths concedes that "my mind has recapitulated every stage of human consciousness from the most primitive state of awareness to the reflective consciousness I enjoy now" (35). While it is impossible to 'jump' a stage, each person develops at a different rate. One may

exhibit mental-egoic consciousness, for instance, while grounded in the more primitive mythic membership mentality. On the other hand, one may temporarily demonstrate characteristics of the magic realm while primarily in mythic without necessitating the need to now place this individual in the regressed level. Furthermore, there are always individuals (though this number is minute) having reached higher states of consciousness than society as a whole. As was discussed in the last chapter, it is also possible to resort to returning to a previous level in the hopes of coming to terms with the inability to find oneself in the culture at hand. Historically, the beginnings of time were dominated by the natural goodness of 'earth mother'; nature, mother and community evolved into technology, patriarchy and individuals. According to the holarchical system, the primitive was taken up into the more evolved system, meaning that individuals do not replace community but are rather at the forefront of older still-existing attributes. Wilber's main argument (and hope) is that society is still evolving into the higher levels of consciousness, or at least out of the mythic membership mentality prevalent on the whole.

Of prime importance, as the romantics agree, is the initial stage of bonding between mother and infant. The child, unable to differentiate between itself and other, demands a stable environment centered around immediate gratification of instinctual needs. This condition corresponds to the Uroboric (Reptilian) consciousness dominating the time of five million BC and is primarily concerned with biological and physical needs. Energy centers from this critical period are either healthy, if criteria of needs are adequately met, or fail to develop normally if basic needs such as affection

suffer undernourishment. Psychologists today stress that the heightened emotional sensitivity of infants responds not only to the individual relationship with his or her mother and father, but more significantly, to the relationship between the parents. If adversely affected by an inconsistent environment, the child may manifest an irrational need for security (manifested in anything from living beyond means to needing continuous verbal encouragement) in later years.

The Typhonic consciousness follows, somewhere around 200,000 BC and corresponds to the developing two to four-year olds' marked preference of likes and dislikes. A gradual lessening of egocentricity marks the first stage of development. While the Great Mother Earth ruled for the mentality of the Typhonic consciousness, the child is likewise still not severed from the whole and fails to make distinctions between fantasy, or imagination, and reality. Emotional damage on this level results in irrational drive for pleasure/esteem, affection, power and control. The first three energy centers prevail in the false self.

Language acquisition, identification issues and the development of brain for reflection and logical thinking are important features of the mythic membership consciousness emerging around 10,000 BC. The self takes definite shape and seeks the security of belonging and identifying with groups. Immortality becomes a threat, for which the self bolsters war as symbol of immortality. Mythic membership seeks strong affiliations to groups; patriotism, nationalism and religious groups serving as core examples. Keating finds mythic membership exemplary of a sandbox mentality towards ownership of the four to eight-year old: 'I was here first so this is mine' or

identifying with a parent 'who is better and bigger than your parent' who would stand up for the child if necessary. Unfortunately as well as certainly, mythic membership presides as a common consciousness level at this stage of evolution. Robert Bly argues exactly this case in his book The Sibling Society, finding that societies today find themselves incompatible with each other because adolescent mentality rules. 'My country is better than your country' or 'my religion is better than yours' closely follows 'my sandbox is larger than your sandbox'. The inability to control anger, words and the like, or to react rather than to respond to a situation, stems from a dominating mythic membership consciousness. Mythic membership seeks to win, not to compromise as it is yet incapable of seeing the other side of an argument or situation.

The passing of mythic to mental-egoic consciousness at about seven years of age finalizes the independence of full self-identity as it participates in subject/object relations. During this socialization period, language develops as parental and societal values are internalized and identification with groups is sought. Inadequate parental guidance through these forming years finds adults typically suffering under emotional programs for happiness, such as for power and esteem, to fill the void from earlier years. Many of these pathologies present themselves in forms of recited scripts that had been internalized during the childhood years of this time. If a six-year old is consistently hammered with a derogative message, such as you are not good enough, it becomes part of the child's personality. They begin to write their own false scripts at this time, which when carried into adulthood, seem even more illogical but remain

ever so common. If met with failure on any level, the false script concludes thereupon that the person is a failure. Behavior therapy focuses on erasing and substituting scripts to enable the adult to function more effectively; the original imprint, however, leaves a definite scar on the self.

From 3000 BC to the present day, mental-egoic (rational) consciousness reigns as highest personal form of consciousness in society. Wilber notes that the first signs of "axial sages, such as Buddha and Lao Tzu began to emerge around the sixth century BC — the very beginning of the middle egoic" (Up 253). This is the evolved centaur stage that finally allows individuals to traverse the remaining stages into ultimate union. The egoic-rational sees that role members supported by mythic circles act in a pack mentality and are unable to break loose. On the other hand, the mental-egoic finds the self as an individual, alienated ego. Reason began to dominate and consequently, the masculine attributes emerged as patriarchy over maternal composition; suppression of the emotional to benefit the rational mind.

To correlate with human development, the mental-egoic characterizes the seven to fifteen-year old; the capacity for logical and abstract thinking increases, the physical body terminates growth, and there can be movement from self-centered actions and values to compassion. As fulcrum-5 (as post-conventional) revealed and was again pointed out in the last chapter, this level of thinking forms the capacity for highly evolved introspective, analytical and differential thinking. Wilber laments that few people actually realize the extent of possibilities of this level, which is the ability to move from egocentric (fulcrum-1) to ethnocentric (fulcrum-3) to now truly have a

global perspective. The highly evolved global view understands that individuals are not isolated strands of the web, but that all life is interconnected and interdependent. While environmental and social issues are slowly filtering into consciousness, it is quite disheartening to see how absentmindedly people shop looking at value solely on economic grounds—indeed, what other would there be?[6] Though at the brink of the transpersonal, global consciousness is still within the structure of the mental-egoic personal consciousness. Spiritual leaders find this progressive worldview is the true calling of present day consciousness (for society), yet however optimistic one can be, Keating realizes that until false self is dismantled, one cannot fully enter the mental-egoic level of consciousness.

The mental-egoic in its fullest capacity touches the first of the transpersonal realms (fulcrum-6, vision-logic) detailed in the second chapter. While it is possible to have glimpses of transpersonal levels from any stage—mystics and artists attest to having inspirational or visionary experiences at early ages—only when the global view has been acknowledged is it possible to actively pursue the spiritual. Wilber points out, as do mystics, that transcendental is not other, since we transcend every level to the next one as it is. It is only natural to enter the transpersonal stages if we consent to so doing. In Hearers of the Word, Karl Rahner insists that what is viewed

[6] I am personally quite fascinated by how communities can shape consciousness and vice versa. While Wal-mart superstores are having to be built to offer people even more stuff for less money, very few people even question how it is the stuff can be so much more for less. That Wal-mart, or Disney for that matter, are some of the biggest exploiters of humans, communities and the environment is conveniently overlooked if at all considered. It is appropriate, that *progressive* thinking includes environmental and social sensitivity, but as Wilber reminds us, there are four quadrants, both external and internal, which need to be addressed for true progression. He also suggests that 'causes' give good exposure to an ego. Nonetheless, the term mindfulness now seeping into everyday language could use

with skepticism by the rational mind, such para-normal phenomena as faith healing or telepathy, is actually only the other half of itself (and perhaps therefore as tribute to Freud) so uncanny.

Each of these evolutionary levels contributes to our present total psychological makeup. The language of psychology complements that of the mystics, who encourage us to embrace our shadow side (including the rejected parts of our ego as well as many of the forgotten 'good' energies) if we ever want to free ourselves from its debilitating powers. As basic psychology teaches, centering energy on this material forms pathologies which manifest themselves in conscious activity, which is why we should note what we dislike in other people since this reflects our own shortcomings. The teachings of Buddha and Jesus tie in to this ancient wisdom, as their message is to love our enemies, as they can prove our most valuable teachers. Additional teaching is that we must integrate, and not dissociate with repressed material, i.e. eating the shadow, as only thereupon can we grow. Though culture may blindly dissuade us from accepting this, we are programmed for human misery given the human condition as the Buddhist ground rule states; accept that life is suffering and the root of suffering desire. We are also instructed that we suffer because we desire but are capable of change given the eightfold path.

Given that all but the tip of our being is stowed in the unconscious, we can not get to know ourselves by thinking, since "thinking only reflects my conscious being" (Griffiths 35). We can access the unconscious only through psychoanalytic therapy or

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some practice, since only then can we begin to pay attention and see with both inner and outer 'I' to what we are doing to ourselves and others as interrelated beings.

meditation leading to contemplation, allowing God to be referred to as Divine Therapist in the Christian tradition. As unconscious material rises to the surface, it can be healed and diffused. As in an archeological dig, a comparison used by not only Wilber but also Keating and a host of others, the most recent ordeals are worked through first to allow the more painful and resilient traumas of childhood and infancy to surface slowly. The teachers of the contemplative path show that in spiraling downward, the cleansing of the false self is simultaneously bringing consciousness to a higher level given the simultaneous unloading of the unconscious as you expand awareness. Because of the danger in dealing with the intensity of unconscious material while unprepared, it is one of the most revered teachings of both eastern and western tradition that one pursue serious meditation in the framework of a tradition, preferably within your own culture. Unprocessed psychological energy can bring psychotic effects, as the same energies which successfully transcended and included lead to mystic awareness gain power as psychotic energies if inadequately processed. Schizophrenia and mystical awareness are based on extending the same energies to the fullest; the former misdirected, the latter directed.

It is perhaps not surprising that the romantic period decayed into madness. Theodore Ziolkowski, in German Romanticism and Its Institutions presents a fascinating case devoted to the study of the increased interest in the pathological and psychiatric states which gained interest the late seventeenth century. Then more so than today, psychological diseases were attributed to something beyond the physical body and rational mind, a similar claim made of mystical awareness. Oliver Sacks, for

instance, claims Hildegard von Bingen's visions were psychotic hallucinations from a temporarily malfunctioning mind. Wilber devotes an interesting chapter to mysticism and schizophrenia in Atman Project. Ziolkowski includes a few lines from Hölderlin's journal, which, purely by choice of words ties in to romantic thought: "The *hero of my novel*...is *a Hölderlin*—someone who goes mad from intoxication with God, from love, and from striving for the divine" (205). Hölderlin himself was believed to have become schizophrenic, and the established connection of elemental life energies between mystical maturity and debilitating illness offers a point of further investigation.

This incredible effort on part of the spiritual travelers seeking enlightenment is heavily touted in Buddhist structure, and though the element of grace predominates in Christian mystical tradition, one must be dedicated to daily practice of meditation. The looming echoes of the biblical demand to "Repent—for the kingdom of God is at hand" has sent numerous interpreters scurrying to rue their sinful nature and engage expectantly in good deeds in preparation for the grand apocalypse which was closer than one's own hand. The words strike a much more humanistic picture if read on a deeper level in conjunction with the understanding of reality within us: repent = change. To use Keating's insightful interpretation; change the direction in which you are looking for happiness. Do not continue to cater to your own false self system but work to free yourself from it, and then continue to live in a world in which you see things as they really are and grasp the truth of the kingdom is here. The author of The Cloud asks one to at least take the first step, which is "the desire to lose the

knowledge and experience of self" (173). Dedication to the work, however unprepared one may find oneself, is prerequisite to coming home; "If any man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and follow me. He who tries to save his life will lose it; but he who loses his life for my sake will save it" (Mark 8: 34-5). Accepting to take up one's own self as the impermanent human condition assumes the weight of the cross, and in the painful process of detaching from it (if we can even label our self in the third person), allow the sweet taste of the mystery—however delicately—begin to provide nourishment. Jesus reassures us that even if we falter under the weight of the cross and presume to fail, an unwavering intention to remain true to the path finds God's unfaltering mercy strengthening the weary.

Since mystics, writers, philosophers and contemporary theorists generally identify man as microcosm of the global macrocosm, it follows that a deep search and knowledge of the self would concurrently, or subsequently by reflection, reveal personal intimacies on a global scope. Novalis's notion of how the self abets union is the point I find most mystical in the writing of Novalis and in the philosophy of the romantics and hence would like to pursue more fully. For the romantics, the journey to the inner self was at the same time the journey towards union, since in the self, union—in bringing opposites together—was to be found. Prevailing also in Hemsterhuis was the additional question if *thought* could then enable one to capture the whole outside of the self.

Though the ideas and language may indeed hint at metaphysical depth, we cannot conclude Novalis had similar insight into the path of the mystic as described above based on his writings. In contrast, I find that Novalis interprets the construction 'the world or heaven is within us' to mean that the world is truly in our (small) self, i.e., the self expands to consume the Self. This juxtaposition, taken in conjunction with the regressive tendency and idealistic visions presented in the previous chapters, presents a difficult case to reconcile with still pervasive mystical reading given Novalis. Seekers have long looked to the writings and sought the tutelage from spiritual masters to glean direction on path to freedom, realizing that true freedom is at the same time complete and utter detachment from all things including the self. The imprisoned self is the yearning voice of the disheveled romantic, yet no matter how expansive and inclusive the self becomes, it can, given the inability to see beyond itself, never be truly free. The notion of self presents a wonderful irony, in that the very object which was glorified as able to lift dualities and otherwise bring together opposites in the vast world inhibited the union so desperately *thought.*

Since prior to Socrates, 'know thyself' and 'look inside' have become catch phrases floundering around in non-specific speech.[7] Wilber, in his book exploring the details of living with No Boundary, questions where exactly to look to find your inner self.[8] He states:

> This is precisely the point at which the mystic universally answers, 'Look inside. Deep inside. For the real self lies within.' Now the mystic is not

[7] See also Novalis' poem "Kenne Dich Selbst" (1,403-4).

[8] It struck me that Wilber uses the term *boundary* much along the lines of Karl Barth uses *border* (Protestantism 347).

> *describing* the real self as *being* inside you- he is *pointing* inside you. ...You realize...that the inside and the outside, the subject and the object, the seer and the seen are one, and thus you spontaneously fall into your natural state. (56)

While the romantic exhausts the inner imaginative realm, the mystic cannot look inside without looking outside, as the true inner self is the All. As much as it is impossible to grasp the illusion of the false self, one cannot point or define the true self since it is spirit. Wilber maintains that it is up to you to 'see' this by transforming your consciousness, remembering, however, that this is not an act of will but of consent. That the romantics approached the self with philosophical speculation renders an opaque allusiveness leading numerous scholars to read the philosophical fragments as mystical, giving the Philosophical Fragments Novalis' most mystical interpretations, even by such authors as O'Brian who question Novalis' religiosity.

Fichte denotes everything outside of our self as *Nicht-ich* which by removal of subject-object dichotomy becomes present in the *Ich*. Everything comes from the I—even the not-I which is designated and subservient to the I. This not-I is of course later substituted by Novalis as 'du' on par with I, a consummation taking place at the innermost center of our being. Novalis sees the essence of self which we typically acquire as potential of the real self: "wir sind gar nicht Ich. Wir können und sollen aber Ich werden, wir sind Keime zum Ichwerden" (1, 22). Truly an insightful observation, if taken with his equally inclusive idea that all are called to be poets, with the added caveat that few become poets, which parallels the similar notion that all are called to be mystics. Novalis qualifies the I to be that of poets, as 'ich potential'

exemplar, and not God or a higher power, which furthers our search for the inner self by teaching us how to see poetically. He refers to this I as a mystical unit:

> Im echten Selbstbewußtsein wechseln wir bloß—aber ohne weiter zu gehn. In ihm sind alle Zustände und Veränderungen unsers empirischen Ich simultan. Wir sind so gut, in demselben Momente, wir vor zwei Jahren als wir in diesem Augenblicke…Alle unsre Erinnerungen, und Begebenheiten reihen sich an eine mystische Einheit, die wir Ich nennen. (3, 431)

According to the romantic, this secret, mystical I is constructed of memories and happenings which, as Novalis continues, draws us into the wonder of an empirical I:

> Wir fühlen uns wundersam von diesem Phaenomenon angezogen—das Phaenomenon scheint uns einzuziehn—Die Welt ist verschwunden—wir sehen nichts, als das Phaenomenon an der Stelle der Welt—und jezt entsteht der Begriff des emp[irischen] Ich. (3, 431-2)

I find this excerpt revealing on two levels. The language hints of a mystical experience on the psychic level, but also lends support to Novalis' dependency on the self for his work. Only the I, in all its glory, beckons the poet's fervent attention.

Novalis is definitely drawn to the idea of a not-I as something greater than standard appreciation realized by Fichte who kept the I as an ideal somehow separate from the real. What this not-I (found under names such as the *unbedingt, Absolute, Ich, nicht ich, freies ich, reines ich*) actually represents, finds contradictory and overlapping references. Novalis comments on the 'pure I' to exist as an outside object (2, 134) and that it is "überall und nirgends" (2, 131). The pure I resembles the absolute, since it as subject may become the empirical I. At other times, the absolute I is also the absolute synthetic I (2, 139) and yet absolute always remains transcendent and thus impossible to reach: "Durch das freywillige Entsagen des Absoluten entsteht die unendliche freye Thätigkeit in uns—das Einzig mögliche Absolute, was uns

gegeben werden kann und was wir nur durch unsre Unvermögenheit ein Absolutes zu erreichen und zu erkennen, finden" (2, 269-70). This thought concludes with the convincingly mystical language that we can only derive at this stated absolute negatively in that we act, and find that by acting we cannot attain what we are searching.

One definitive mark of Novalis (and to whatever extent this rests on Fichte's original ideas) is that the I, and the not-I are *thinking* entities as subject/object complements. If the subject feels, then the object thinks and vice versa (2, 131). The I is always dependant on something other to define it. Novalis likens a sort of inbetween space, at times floating or forming a sphere which on some level merges real and ideal, perhaps one which could have room for both God and I: "D[ie] Handlung, daß Ich sich als Ich sezt muß mit der Antithese eines unabhängigen Nichtich und der Beziehung auf einen sie umschließende Sfäre verknüpft seyn- diese Sfäre kann man Gott und Ich nennen" (2, 107-8). Since we can presume that God falls under the category of transcendent beings, he also exists as an illusion as formed by the constructing subject. Novalis speaks of the illusion that there was once a time of not-I, because it is a contradiction "daß in der Zeit etwas geschehn solle, was alle Zeit aufhebt,...in jedem Augenblick, da wir frey handeln ist ein solcher Triumpf des unendlichen Ich über das Endliche, für diesen Moment ist das Nichtich wircklich vernichtet" (2, 269).

Novalis continues with the following idea that we cannot get rid of time given that we can not think away time, to which the mystic would respond: stop thinking and

you could experience the cessation of time: "Die Zeit kann nie aufhören—*Wegdenken* können wir die Zeit nicht—denn die Zeit ist ja Bedingung des denkenden Wesens—die Zeit hört nur mit dem Denken auf. Denken außer der Zeit ist ein Unding" (2, 269). This section follows with the already cited notion that the Golden Age as a state of non-doing for the thinking self and can therefore be the goal of the person who shall forever exist as is his nature (2, 269). Furthermore, Novalis argues that reality must be able to be thought: "Alle Realität, von der wir reden können muß eine *denkbare* seyn" (2, 268). He continues here that philosophy remains in the constraints of the conscious and only be reflective thinking can we at all handle freely. Free reflective thinking belongs to the not-I sphere (2, 266) and as such, it is language, lastly, which acts as mediator between reality and ideal.

Since Novalis places imagination as highest conscious activity, the self is at its highest creative capability when it feels and thinks. Since the subject and absolute I are one (2, 134) the fact that the absolute I is both one and divided (2, 126) allows the subject to act freely. The drive to the Absolute is that of the freely thinking and feeling I. But it likewise indicates that we are in indefinite *streben* since the subject will most probably never become the pure I.

It is difficult to decipher exactly what it is that leads to the Infinite, but in the section on the emipirical I, Novalis introduces the felt I and the thought I as the two "mittelbare Ichs" which lead from the finite to the infinite: "Das absolute Ich geht vom Unendlichen zum Endlichen, das mittelbare Ich vom Endlichen zum Unendlichen" (2, 126). Either way, Novalis sees himself on a plane between, perhaps

himself mediating the infinite to the finite as capabilities of the poet. For Novalis, the Absolute is there for those endowed with poetic qualities we have only to dedicate our life to developing these to their full potential and so ultimately realize this truth. The search for self is greatly abetted by the workings of the ideal feminine.

Romantic Love

The attraction Papagena's exercised on Papageno is similarly found in Sophie's allure for Novalis. Dilthey's character sketch portrays Novalis as immobilized by the death of his beloved brother so shortly after losing Sophia to tuberculosis. While in sorrowful mourning, Novalis brooded moods that completely infused his outlook with guilty and woeful longing to join the deceased. It was the poet's confirmed belief, and one may add intention, to follow his beloved into death when his spirit could no longer endure the pains of separation. Death would reunite the lovers in eternal bliss. Dilthey notes that it was in his decision to die that his vivid life of fantasy in this world evolved: "Aus dem Entschluß zu sterben entwickelte sich ein Phantasieleben in der jenseitigen Welt" (181). This desire for death did not stem from suicidal urges, but as a gradual decline of this life as the focus shifts toward the next life. All thoughts and motivations where for a life temporally following his physical death, which as has been shown, may be religious but is not considered a mystical view. It is the romantic interpretation of night and death, not the mystical. Sophie, as the object of Hardenberg's fervent love and desire is both the symbol and

the referent, there are no hidden mysteries. It is lastly, his *spiritu*al union with Sophie by which the poet feels at once part of the next world while enduring the current.

The oft-cited 'mystical awakening' undergone at Sophie's grave survives as instigating phenomenon to cast the mystical hue over Novalis. This revelation at the grave is from a journal entry of the 13. May 1795, a few months after her death. Novalis had awakened early to spend most of the day reading Shakespeare and later that evening had visited Sopihe's grave: "Dort war ich unbeschreiblich freudig—auf blitzende Enthusiasmus Momente—Das Grab blies ich wie Staub, vor mir hin—Jahrhunderte waren wie Momente—ihre Nähe war fühlbar—ich glaubte sie solle immer vortreten-" (4, 35-6).[9] The poet returns home in thought. It is difficult to ascertain any transformative outcome of this illuminating experience, other than that Novalis wished to 'see' her again. The young poet was by personality quite open to altering experiences and ardently desired their effects. From the beginning, Sophie and Friedrich's relationship was one of youthful fascination for a feeling yet unbeknownst to her and perhaps only partially satisfied for him. Sophie, as is known, was a frail girl just shy of fourteen years when she met the seventeen-year old Hardenberg. The poet's diary entry entitled 'Klarisse' praises Sophie's untutored innocence and naive eagerness to prove a suitable companion. Lacking outstanding

[9] I think, also, of the French film All the Mornings of the World in which St. Castille is cast as a prototypical artist. His creative mind is fueled by his longing for his late wife, his memories of her press him on, and he is completely devoted to her foregoing any contact with outside world. Very believable that he has visions of her—yet there is nothing other than innate creative desire. Memories present an interesting construct; born of the past, they very vividly create the present with which the subject interacts. Were I to direct a film of Novalis' life, I would similarly portray the artist lost in thought about his beloved and behold, there she appears in his mind. Since the mind and the body extend beyond the skin, the appearance naturally registers as real.

features of a strong personality, she provided the young poet with lax material he could mold to an ideal within his mind. The young bride, as *bürgerlich*, would have been denied favor as wife of nobility in the eyes of Friedrich's proud father. Overtones of sacrificial offerings pierces his writing when he states that it is for her that he must live, as the following representative journal entry shows:

> Ich muß nur immermehr *um IhretWillen leben—für Sie* bin ich nur—für mich und für keinen Andern nicht. Sie ist das Höchste—das Einzige. *Wenn ich nur in jedem Augenblicke ihrer werth seyn könnte*—Meine Hauptaufgabe sollte seyn—Alles in Beziehung auf ihre Idee zu bringen. (4, 37)

Similarly, Heinrich makes known to Mathilde that without her, he should be nothing. Similarly, mystics (especially bridal mysticism) submit to God that without him, they would be nothing. Mystics use the language of Eros to refer to the language of Agape.[10] Novalis's Hymns include praises to Christ comparable to the aforementioned example, yet even then, it is not clear whether he regards Maria, Christ and Sophie interchangeable. Sophie arguably remains prominent object of Novalis' fervent adoration and for the poet himself as a spiritual being complementary to his pious intentions.

The journal entries in the months after Sophie's death give quite the 'romantic' view of the lover plagued by the sudden departure of his beloved. Novalis often finds himself immersed in "einen lebhaften Eindruck ihres Todes" and in late April he writes "[ich habe] *recht innig an Sie gedacht*" (4, 33). The overall tone of his recollection, though, strikes me not so much elegiac as delighted by the memories she

[10] It could be argued, I think, that Novalis incites the language of agape to refer to level of eros.

provides: "Nur in ihrem Andenken ist mir wahrhaft wohl" (4, 30) and her memory never fails to provide frivolous, or light-minded thoughts, "es fehlt nicht an leichtsinnigen Gedanken" (4, 22). While the overt preoccupation with the memory of Sophie eventually transferred to matters of spiritual and philosophical interest, Novalis remained faithful—or forever plagued—by the emotions confessed in his journal.

The pervasive and abiding image of the ideal virgin found reflections not only in Novalis' journal but also in his philosophical work. In the Teplitzer Fragmente Novalis finds that the virgin as mother bears the future:

> Das schöne Geheimniß der Jungfrau, was sie eben so unaussprechlich anziehen macht, ist das Vorgefühl der Mutterschaft—die Ahndung einer künftigen Welt, die in ihr schlummert, und sich aus ihr entwickeln soll. Sie ist das treffendste Ebenbild der Zukunft. (2, 618)[11]

Inhibiting genuine developmental growth, the ideal of the past and future is in form of the virgin child. Save for mention of Sophie in letters, the journal entries bearing her reference, with the exception of Klarissa, are written after her death. As research suggests, minimal evidence in forms of personal correspondence between the two exists, rendering the prevailing myth of their saintly relationship as most certainly fabricated. As O'Brian argues, the "loss of the documentation—if it ever existed—from and about Sophie has especially afforded biographers great freedom in speculating about her character and the nature of her interaction with Hardenberg, but the fact remains that we know next to nothing about either, and probably never shall" (36).

[11] This excerpt provides additional support for the virgin/wife section of the previous chapter.

The name of his bride, Sophie, Novalis writes in one of his most telling statements, carries the name as his favorite area of study, philosophy. The study of sophie, wisdom, as the study of his life and as such, Sophie is also the key to his self. At the same time, Novalis claims that what one loves colors much of what one sees: "Was man liebt, findet man überall, und sieht überall Ähnlichkeiten" (2, 485). Practicing his belief in the oneness of all, Novalis identifies everything with Sophie, in particularly his life and work. I would further add that the most commonly exhibited portrait of Novalis marks strikingly feminine features, which only supports Novalis as embracing the spiritual which he associates with the feminine.

Friedrich Schlegel voiced similar opinions which may to a certain extent put Novalis' singular devotion to Sophie in perspective.[12] A fragment from Schlegel's Ideen claims that the inner nature of women is poetry: "Die Poesie der Dichter bedürfen die Frauen weniger, weil ihr eigenstes Wesen Poesie ist" (2, 269). Schlegel also identifies the woman's essence as harmony: "Everything that has a tendency toward absolute harmony, or a stress on harmony, is related to the mystical, for example, *femininity*. For its essence is inner congruence and a striving toward external unity" (cited in Schulte-Sasse 397-99). The opinions circulated among the young romantics most certainly lead to a fusion of mystical with many of the assets today regarded as primarily sense related.

[12] Schulte-Sasse has edited an anthology of early Romantic writers and presents a compendium of writings on the feminine. His selection helped define my search for the influence to which Novalis may have succumbed with his vision of femininity.

Novalis eulogizes the hidden talents of women: "Sie sind ein liebliches Geheimniß—nur verhüllt—nicht verschlossen" (2, 617) which heightens the allure of women to an even greater degree. The "Zueignung" found in the novel Heinrich von Ofterdingen elevates Sophie to a muse and guardian of his poetry—his life. Novalis' deceased beloved is, what he and others only aspire to be—pure poetry. Novalis clung to an idealized and poeticized image he was unable and unwilling to release. The pining wounds of longing weakened the poet but strengthened the spirit:

> Wer den Schmerz flieht, will nicht mehr lieben. Der Liebende muß die Lücke ewig fühlen., die Wunde stets offen erhalten. Gott erhalte mir immer diesen unbeschreiblichen lieben Schmerz— die wehmüthige Errinnerung—diese muthige Sehnsucht—den männlichen Entschluß und den felsen *vesten Glauben.* Ohne meine Sophie bin ich gar nichts—Mit Ihr Alles. (4, 22)

His perpetuating image of Sophie, as the vision at her gravesite and lasting impressions cast upon the poet as creative source served as a debilitating attachment to which Novalis clung.[13] In terms of the mystical journey, one works to rid of all attachments but even on the more level psychological domain, disastrous psychological trauma accumulates with an attachment of this sort. Constantly pulled to localize from this certain experience, one is not free to concentrate at the matter at hand and, as Novalis would agree, each new situation is colored by the memory of the experience. Personal loss can awaken a mystical calling, since at deepest points of need, there is a tendency to turn to transcendent power. Sudden loss is a powerful experience and correlated as a precursor to mystic experience as one is more

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[13] O'Brian warns of putting too much weight on anything Novalis says: "As is ever the case with Hardenberg's writings and 'experiences,' it is impossible to say which comes first—the experiences or

vulnerable to depth of feeling. Death, especially one's own, is a frightening experience forcing recognition of the ultimate nothingness we have tried to shield. Literally stripped of all possessions, death presents us with our true identity, a usually traumatic encounter Freud recognized as our primal conflict. Overwhelming loss expels us into the desert experience touted by mystics as conditional to spiritual growth. Loss can be, but is not always, a transforming experience as we are confronted with a depth of emotion and lack of control as never before.

Interestingly enough, apophatic mystics write unabashedly about locutions and visions as obstacles on the spiritual path. The power of visualization, John of the Cross warns, if it is indeed a charismatic gift from God, accomplishes its work instantly. By no means should we ourselves place any importance on the experience and immediately let go the memory of the experience, however impossible this may seem. The visionary mystic known in her time as 'prophetess of the Rhein', Hildegard von Bingen, endured a life dictated by visions and voices. Notable among saints and women mystics is the common physical component of the ecstatic trances many report during periods of prayer. While fascinating on its own account, visionary mystical experiences are on the seventh and eighth fulcrum of Wilber's ladder and important as passages to the pure experience. In Hildegard's example, the visions and heavenly auditory powers of suggestion cannot be dismissed as self constructed as the Light empowered her to accomplish otherwise impossible physical and mental deeds. With no reason other than 'my voices told me so', Hildegard built a new monastery against

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the figurations—since the former are known to us only through writings that indicate how the experience (such as the Easter Sunday visit at Sophie's grave) were staged from the start" (248).

the orders of the bishop, gave advice to the pope, and if met with resistance trying to carry out the orders of the Light, would become deathly ill until the resistance, whether papal authorities or her superiors, relented. One such incident required the frail nun to become so heavy numerous men were unable to lift her off the cot. Acknowledging her unworthiness to be but a tool for God's work unfolding, Hildegard credited only the Living Light for any action undertaken on her part. She had consented to God's will to be granted ecstatic experiences for a greater purpose.

Ecstatic experiences, such as an out of body experience, are not necessarily supernatural. They only seem phenomenal and other worldly coming from a lower level of consciousness. Thomas Keating cautions that if, unlike Hildegard's example, the source of the vision cannot be determined, the ecstatic states were solely ego trips if thinking was involved. The devil (subversive shadow powers at work) commonly manifests himself in godlike disguise and presents himself temptingly, as Jesus experienced during his forty day fast in the desert. With experiences from the higher fulcrums, a guru would discern the purity of the occurrence, or one would look for the fruits of the experience but not at the experience as a single event.

I agree with mainstream interpretations assessing the *Sophienerlebnis* as pivotal event in Novalis' life. For it to additionally serve as an illumination steering a mystical path I fail to find convincing evidence. However profound and artistically beneficial Novalis' relationship with his deceased bride remained, it was through the power of his own creative genius that he lived poetically. In conjunction with the reservations already mentioned, it is, in contrast to the mature love of the mystics as

will be detailed shortly, a condition of *being in love* which permeates the romantic program for union. Romantic condition is one of pre-love, a philosophy based on the initial exuberance and sensitivities unleashed by feelings of being in love. The romantics desired to love truly, yet they remained within the confines of the initial stage of love. The romantics cleverly exhibit our popular notions of 'romantic love' to distinguish from true or mature love. Ironically, our association with romantic love fringes on future oriented ideals, hopes and dreams, but seldom one of enduring reality. Under the illusion of true love, impassioned feelings free the soul to take flight with the beloved. The present moment is enjoyed only in passing since all efforts are on hoping for the experience to last forever. Rarely does romantic love last beyond the initial stages of fervent intensity and impassioned desire so inspiring to poets. To mature as true love, romantic love must grow in manner akin, but not into, the love as defined by mystics. Mystics use the language of romantic love to most accurately depict their experience, yet the love is of a different nature. William Johnston simply describes two levels of love in his book Letters to Contemplatives. Active love as empowered by an act of will touches a person, the universe and the all (apropos Novalis). A deeper level of love is the passive or non-objective love which has no specific object although it radiates to the person, the universe and all from the being as love. This second degree of love Johnston identifies as the core of mysticism. This simple distinction clarifies differences between romantic and mystical love and also descriptively points to the confusion inevitable if the two levels of love are not addressed, since the writers share a language of love which makes no distinctions.

The romantics, those eclectic synthesizers, were set to make up their own myth by finding meaning in life through love, or perpetuating and perfecting the sensation of being in love. We often read in secondary literature that in his love for Sophie, as the most attributed example, Novalis was actually in love with the whole world, a natural extenuation found in 'beings in love'. Judicious reading discloses Sophie, not God, as love and unifying agent.[14] Hiebel, in Novalis: Deutscher Dichter, Europäischer Denker, Christlicher Seher, comments on the mystical marriage consummated in the poems—a marriage between the soul and Christ, often seen as the union of eros and agape, as Jesus and Maria represent in the fifth Hymn. Earthly love and heavenly love are loosely grasped understandings of Eros and Agape. Wilber points out an additional venue attributed to Plotinus, suggesting that these two forces exist already but must be harmonized: "In Christian terms, *Eros* or transcendental wisdom (the lower reaching up to the higher) has to be balanced with compassion or *Agape* (the higher reaching down and embracing the lower)—at each and every stage"

[14] The enigma 'Sophie' further complicates things as she could be in reference to Novalis' fiancée or on the impersonal level when we include Jung's four symbols and levels of love by way of anima; Eve for biological love, Helen of Troy for romantic love, Virgin Mary object of devotional love and Sophia for mystical love (cited in Johnston, The Mirror Mind, 120-6). Johnston points out that these are four evolutionary levels of love which transfer from the lower to the higher. Devotional love to Mary, of which Novalis offers admirable examples in poems, transforms into the mystical love of Sophia when purified. As with other examples, the levels are themselves incomplete pointers to the ultimate and always identified as such. I think it would prove interesting to read Klingsohr's Märchen in light of four Jungian levels of anima (Eros and Sophie as given).

To include one more addendum to this lengthening note on symbolic female representations, I find it interesting, albeit unsubstantiated, that Pfefferkorn suggests that Novalis "split his love into an earthly one for Julie and a heavenly one for Sophie" (136). Until the end of his life, Novalis views Sophie as his guiding muse and primary inspiration and, I would argue, as a separate category—or perhaps beyond all category- than anything on this earth. It seems plausible to determine, however, that Novalis himself elevated the person or spirit Sophie to approximate the archetype of Sophie in Jungian terms.

(Sex 338). Novalis couples Christ with his beloved, Sophie, not in the ephemeral days on earth, but in the eternal and true home in heaven.

In Heinrich's blissful talks with Mathilde on the eternal love which they feel for each other, it may well be the case that Swedenborg's outline of marriages in heaven helped sustain Novalis' intrinsic belief in everlasting life. The Swedish mystic writes that a marriage in the heavens is taken in form of the male understanding and the female will. Interestingly enough in light of the Jungian degrees of the feminine (see previous footnote), Swedenburg associates the degrees of love with wisdom, originating at birth at the natural degree and evolving consequently to the spiritual degree of love and culminate in celestial— here love of God is love of all. Though not directly, Swedenborg warns against love of self, finding that divine love warms the heavens, whereas flagrant self-love burns in hell. Evolving love parallels the growth of life itself which comes however from a greater source than the self: "Man is not life, but an organ recipient of life from God; and love together with wisdom is life; furthermore, God is love itself and wisdom itself, and thus life itself" (562-3).

In an illustrative article on "The Language of Love in Christian and Jewish Mysticism", Bernard McGinn tackles the popular misconceptions fueling heated debate about the erotic language used by mystics, which he defends is not "sublimated expression of libidinal urges" (in Katz Mysticism 202). Much lies in the interpretation; Klingsohr informs Heinrich to the dismay of feminists who can here once again find support for women (as love) given voice by men: "Die Liebe ist stumm, nur die Poesie kann für sie sprechen"(1, 287). Mystics unite with God as love and illustrate in

metaphorical language expressions of love to join eros and agape. McGinn points out that Christians vie for an experience of God in a very personal way, so that love is reified in terms of the family, friends and lovers in an intense, passionate manner not only Christians find shocking. William Johnston, in The Mirror Mind argues additionally that the medieval mystics knowingly used the pagan terms of courtly love as apposite metaphors for spiritual love. McGinn points us to the sensual language used in Song of Songs, for which Origen has provided a mystical commentary and which McGinn cites as "a fundamental document for the utilization of erotic imagery in Christian mysticism" ("Language" 212). As with other metaphors, the linguistic one can only point to the intensity of the divine one experienced. The greater the intensity of spiritual desire, the more fruitful will have proved the communion. Importantly, mystics not just enjoy the experience but are transformed by it to become love itself.

Across the board, the journey towards union is one of love at various stages of perfection. Individual mystics are drawn more to the language of love, such as Bernard of Clairveux (1090-1153), noted as the first prolocutor of love mysticism, or in German *Braut* or *Minnemystik*. Depictions found in various mystical sources reflect different levels of experiencing the reality of love. St. Theresa, for example, presents her view from Wilber's subtle level of consciousness; as the famous metaphor of the silkworm (ego) dies to itself to free the butterfly (soul), the soul continues its growth toward the seventh mansion—the spiritual marriage of the soul with her Ultimate Creator. Mechthild von Margdeburg (1207-84) strikes me as a romantic and

emotional type of mystical genius and is representative of love, or bridal mysticism, governing her time. As Egan writes in his introduction to Christian Mysticism, 'the subjective pole of her mystical experiences is not the spirit's primordial unity, but the mystical senses" (249). In Mechthild's noted mystical text the Flowing Light of the Godhead, the soul converses with the senses, the Lord, and the Holy Spirit crying "I must to God-/ My Father through nature, / My Brother through humanity, / My Bridegroom through Love, / His am I for ever!" The only thing the Lord asks of the soul is to let go of the self, as the soul is by nature already his. To attain perfect mystical union in love, one must not only have undergone the beginner's purgation of the sensual night, but more importantly but so much less frequently, the night of spirit. But all levels leading to that graced state are invitations to higher consciousness and the call to love.

St. Bernard addresses the goal of losing the self to attain fullness of love. As Bernard sees it, the soul's union with the Beloved in set in four degrees of love from the personal to the global. The fourth results in a loss of self in answer to the question "How will God be all in all (1 Cor 15:26) if anything of man remains in man?...To lose yourself as though you did not exist and to have no sense of yourself, to be emptied out of yourself (Phil 2:7) and almost annihilated, belongs to heavenly, not to human love"(On Loving God 22). Spiritual love requires austere asceticism, necessary to become detached enough of all desire so that one is free to *be* love. The Book of Privy Counseling, written by the anonymous fourteenth century author (also of The Cloud) for his more advanced students, speaks continuously of 'naked intent';

giving to God our nakedness so we may be fully clothed by him and otherwise desiring only Him in receptive attitude. "For this", states the author of the Cloud, "is the way of all real love"(172). "The lover will utterly and completely despoil himself of everything, even his very self, because of the one he loves... This is the meaning of our Lord's words: 'Anyone who wishes to love me let him forsake himself'" (Cloud 172).[15] The image of love carries with it peace and tranquility, at having arrived at a state ready to enjoy it. While the path may be arduous, the rewards are without parallel. The words of John of the Cross can be found cited again in the Cloud; knowledge is full of labor, love full of rest. Perfect love is the goal of the mystic, for in perfect love, only God exists as that is his being.

For God as love perfected to consummate our whole being, it logically follows that our illusory self as given above must dissolve. Human potentiality flourishes when self- constructions fail to deliver true happiness. A perfectly paradoxical passage from St. John of the Cross identifies that only in desiring nothing, we gain all:

> In order to arrive at possessing everything, desire to possess nothing.
> In order to arrive at being everything, desire to be nothing.
> In order to arrive at knowing everything, desire to know nothing.[16]

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[15] I was struck with the similarity of wording in an essay written by Anabaptist Hans Denck "Concerning True Love" (1527): "Love is a spiritual power. The lover desires to be united with the beloved. Where love is fulfilled, the lover does not objectify the beloved. The lover forgets himself, as if he were no more, and without shame he yearns for his beloved...The lover would gladly and willingly face death for the benefit of the beloved. Indeed, the lover might be so foolish as to die to please his beloved, even knowing that no other benefit could come from the act" (Early 112). As with the idea of death already addressed in a previous section, one is led to believe here that it is a physical death of the body, not the self specified by the author of the Cloud.

[16] Ascent of Mount Carmel I, 13 v.11.

Here St. John goes beyond the Dionysian abnegation of knowing to include also feeling and willing. St. John's credo proclaimed: *nada, nada, nada.* And this *nada*, to even begin to bear meaning, must be interpreted in the mystical framework and not in the linguistic. For *nada* is at the same time *todo*, reflecting the wisdom found in the Heart Sutra—form is emptiness and the very emptiness is form. To reach this apex of experiential understanding, the person must undergo periods of purifying periods known as 'nights'. St. John distinguishes among the active and passive night of sense, followed by the active and passive night of spirit. These nights dim the 'enlightened' activities and faculties while testing the strength of faith, which the intellect classifies as darkness. Only when the intentions have been purified and strengthened to undergo the final slaying of ego through the night of the spirit can one finally emerge as free from the false self to embrace the lover completely.

Unlike the metaphor of night for the romantics in which life truly began, night for the mystics is above all an absence. As given in the introductory chapter, the night follows the bliss of felt presence of divine love which made one eager to spend time in meditation. Blissful feelings, however, are merely invitations to grow and if one accepts, must be willing to undergo the trials of the journey. The first night, the sensual night, dims the mental and emotional faculties as faith and trust is tested and purified. While we may feel that God is absent, this is merely one of our perceptions, since the great teachings of the mystics is to lead us to recognize that God is always completely present within us. St. John explains that while it may appear contradictory that it is especially during the night that the soul is receiving the most direct beam of

love, the night is known so more because it is a period—perhaps several years—in which the soul feels afflicted and tormented in its own struggle. St. John's friend St. Theresa shows by the image of the worm and the butterfly, that the ego as well as the soul must be purified.

Having become arid, the senses no longer take pleasure in the usual meditative hour and the like. The first night prepares for the second much more painful night of the spirit. St. John writes in his work The Dark Night: "The purgation of sense will become fully effective only when the purgation of the spirit begins in earnest. The night of sense, therefore, should be called a transformation and restraining of desire rather than a genuine purgation" (186). As would be expected, many exercise their free will to put the emphasis on knowing and experiencing everything and sever, thereby, at least for the time, the process of spiritual and psychological maturity.

The transient drying up of the senses (an image also used by Hildegard when lacking *veridatis*) enables their return as a transformed and purified force. Without going into the detail needed for the basic summary, the nights fulfill the role of purgatory. Those having surrendered completely to God's will to no longer desire anything, can, as enlightened beings, seek to enlighten those still on the journey.

Mystical love is a call to service. It is not to love or be loved but to *be* love. While we may will to be loving towards all, as the active love described by Johnston, mystical love is an experience of grace and in its purest form selfless and in this way impersonal, or rather transpersonal. The call to service is one of the greatest assets of fruitful spiritual life, as articulated in the following words:

> The goal of mysticism is therefore an everyday life that is experienced in the light of the mystical experience and is permeated by it. For this reason the mystical life does not require men and women to go permanently into solitude or the cloister. Such a retreat may be advisable or even necessary for a time, but it is not the mystical ideal, since the experience of oneness with the divine life in one's own depths is only a beginning (Jäger The Way 50)

That Novalis was raised in the German *Adel*, an upbringing he shared with Schelling, Fichte and others, attributes to an elitist reading of the young romantics. Reared in a protective environment, the children, like their parents, believed themselves superior to common society. Devoted to the idea and the establishment of 'the human', the elite spent childhood in play, were excused from working and encouraged living in the cultural world of religion and art. Richard Samuel, in his introduction to the standard edition of the journals, writes about the close relationship Novalis shared with his family, especially with his (elder) brother Erasmus. Although of high class, the Hardenbergs mingled with middle class families, and biographers often note how Novalis's dress would be of elegant, yet simple design and his demeanor unpretentious. But Novalis gives convincing indications that he felt most at ease with members of his own class and then, only as long as was beneficial for him. The following journal entries, for example, confess the poet's need to avoid people to remain in his heights. Having jotted down his daily activities of walking, reading Meister, thinking of Sophie, then dining with guests, Novalis pens:

> Nachher alg[emeines] Gespräch—bis ich hinauf gieng. Jetzt schein ich ebenfalls kalt und *zu sehr in der Stimmung des Alltagslebens zu seyn.* Die Gesellschaft will mir noch gar nicht bekommen. Strebe nur nach der höhern, permanenten Reflexion und ihrer Stimmung. O! daß ich sowenig in der Höhe bleiben kann. (4, 33)
> Menschen passen sich nicht mehr für mich, so wie ich nicht mehr unter die Menschen passe. (4, 49)

The romantic way shunned the way of the common world. Novalis's childhood upbringing removed from the masses makes an interesting and applicable comparison to those seeking connection with the higher self. Alternative communities, notably the monastic setting, offer religious refuge from worldly influences, freeing them to devote themselves to matters of the spirit. The romantic withdrawal to keep outside influences at bay resembles one approach of the contemplative orders, for example the Cistercians, who strictly follow the *ora et labora* rule in a solitary setting. Missionary orders, on the other hand, actively engage in community endeavors. Yet even monasticism and religious settings are not perfect and so, fitting in neither with the secular nor religious world of his time, St. Francis founded his own community practicing extreme poverty. The desert fathers likewise retreated from society into the Egyptian desert and Catherine of Sienna spent many years in solitude until she was ready to concern herself fully with social issues. To include an eastern example, every aspect of Siddhartha's childhood was controlled to protect him from outside influences likely to distract him from his primary role: to reach enlightenment to subsequently lead his people on the spiritual path.

Whether by active or passive (meditative) participation, the motivation for taking refuge from the details of mundane life to accelerate spiritual development must ultimately be for the collective good. Somewhat like Novalis' hope that the poetical life of a few individuals would solicit followers, meditative practicioners appreciate that the raising of consciousness by individuals benefits the collective. Though possible that Novalis foresees in his novel, for example, a political ideal of

progressive society, it is far more difficult to ascertain that Novalis sought the seclusion to his room, nature or his mind for anything greater than his own poetical advancement. Whichever alternative form of community, solitude cannot be sought as an escape but as the opportunity to focus all energy on spiritual growth. Otherwise, it is sure to disappoint. With his well known words 'to live in the world but not of it', St. Augustine suggests individuals can practice a contemplative lifestyle outside monastery walls. In other words, conscious living, within or without the monastic setting, frees one from assuming societal structures. The spiritual life places greater importance on motivation than actions themselves.

More subtle but no less important, the Pietistic upbringing common to the romantics infiltrated the consciousness of living removed from the influences of the masses. The Hutterites, a sect growing out of Southern Germany and Austrian Anabaptism in early sixteenth century practiced a communal life which approached communist ideals. Much like Francis of Assisi three centuries prior, this miners' fraternity lived a stark contrast to the gluttonous and self-interested attitude of the church. Peter Walpot, an instrumental Austrian Hutterite leader of his time, denounced personal property as secular: "Private property does not belong in the Christian Church. ... It is a thing of the world" (Early 191). In addition, Anabaptists, as their name indicates, believed adults should express desire for baptism, not have it be an assumed action upon an infant. As the Catholic church gained power from within its own institutional dogma, the Anabaptists encouraged a return to the Bible as centrifical force, an effort already undertaken but never fulfilled, according to the

Anabaptists (Pietism being a Lutheran reform movement), by both Luther and Zwingli. The immediacy of God fostered equality among the people and not surprisingly, rendered clerical hierarchies obsolete. One additional pietistical feature deserves special mention in relation to Novalis' reigning fascination, or perhaps committed alliance, with death. Hutterite writing expounds prolifically on the great gift of self-sacrifice endowed to Christians. As Jesus crucified personifies, there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for others. To die a martyr in the name of the risen Christ was the supreme testimony of true fraternity, equality and freedom. Little wonder that sentiments such as these, complete with the Protestant teaching that golden gates awaited your entrance into the next world, would speak at a heartfelt level to Novalis' kindred spirit.

The romantics practiced ascending piety; keeping lofty virtuous thoughts as a fortress of the mind to block earthly gravitational pull. Enumerating the slight to magnanimous differences of intention between romantic and mystic appreciation of communal living best broached elsewhere, it serves to mention in passing that whatever the preferences of communities (missionary, contemplative or somewhere in between), inalienable service to God's will must remain sole motivation. However much romantic striving for differentiation from the sin-fraught world elicits mystical overtones, it is but an incomplete observance if self-will remains. Moreover, the mystical tradition is clearly one of balance, much as activity and rest complement each other harmoniously.

Mystics prefer depicting the Christian way to perfection as the Mary/Martha pairing, or the active life complementing the contemplative. Having won long standing favor over passive *being*, the cultural stress on active *doing* proves it as difficult today as to Jesus' disciples then to understand the master's overt dismissal of Martha's genuine domestic concern. As the parable proceeds, Martha dutifully caters to the cherished guest, while her sister Mary (reposed at his feet), absorbs the Master's teaching. Martha understandably queries of their guest if it bothers him not, that while Mary sits there completely oblivious to all her surroundings, she herself is left with all the work. Jesus patiently remonstrates that the latter contemplative position assumed by Mary, is the better in regards to reaching union with God. Many mystics have commented on this biblical passage, of which I find Tauler's contribution poignantly simple: "When Our Lord reproved Martha, it was not because of her work—it was good and holy—but because she was overly concerned [about it] (155).[17] Thomas Keating interprets the biblical passage as demonstrating that Mary focused on Jesus amidst the blur of Martha's activity, in other words that Mary remained in contemplative communion, the "gift of oneself to God and of God to us" (Awakenings 42-3) and hence represents the receptive openness necessary to accept the invitation. At the risk of assuming a passive attitude, not equivocal to the mystical receptive attitude, activity is necessary and becomes purified with right intention. In the words of St. Theresa: "To give our Lord a perfect hospitality, Mary and Martha must combine" (Interior Castle Collected Works 448).

[17] Very similar interpretation given by Tauler's contemporary John Ruusbroec: "He [Jesus] die not blame Martha for her service, for that was good and useful, but rather for her anxiety and for being

To emphasize that intention and motivation are the two primary constituents in the spiritual journey and cannot be objectified, Keating provides the example that establishing a non-profit organization which feeds millions of an otherwise hungry community is truly a compassionate gesture, but one which merits no rewards on the path towards wholeness if egocentric benefits nourish the false self system's need for esteem and competitive pride. Jesus referred to those who serve or offer goods in the sight of others as hypocrites. I agree with Lukács that while passionate about life and nature, the romantics were most passionate about themselves. Never missing an opportunity to give his social commentary, Lukács applauds the ability of romantics to make an arrogant profession of humility, especially in the case of Rousseau (Schulz 102). Reluctant to gauge actions hypocritical myself, I admire Lukács's resolve, in this case, to do so.

Invariably another difficult point of discretion to reconcile for those called to service oriented positions who are 'busy doing something useful' is that the meditator idly sits there doing nothing. Ultimately, the two aspects of spiritual growth, as touted among all the great religions, must balance to be the perfect union they are. As the texts from last year's annual meeting of intermonastic dialog attest, Buddhists concede that many novices are spending so much time preparing for enlightenment that the rule of social concern is forgotten. The mystics, and here Merton comes to mind particularly, are adamant about their social responsibility. Noticeably missing from the stereotypical characterization of the emaciated robed bearded elderly man sitting cross-legged by the river or in front of a cave, interspersing unidentifiable chanting

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troubled and oppressed by the multiplicity of her exterior work" (166).

sounds to days spent in silent meditation, is the social dimension: to purify himself from himself so that he may better serve the community. In addition to such mystical masterpieces as What is Contemplation, Merton showed his great social concern writing prolifically on slavery, Marxism and the urgency for political peace such as in the selection of letters collected in the book Hidden Ground of Love. Having found peace within himself, Merton could effectively work for justice in the world. Reason divides the complementary aspects of the spiritual life into the active and the contemplative, but these are, as is the Mary and Martha pairing, in essence one being.

The Flemish mystic Ruusbroec observed that a person having been graced by God's infinite goodness "stands ready and willing to do all that God commands and is strong and courageous in suffering and enduring all that God sends him" (184). But what reason finds extraordinary, the mystic sees as the common life, stating he "therefore leads a common life, for he is equally ready for contemplation or for action and is perfect in both" (184). In the short essay "The Sparkling Stone", Ruusbroec identifies the four elements necessary to achieve the perfect life culminated in the contemplative. At this level, the contemplative experiences a love beyond reason and having no ground, no ground defined only as "infinitely deep, infinitely high, and infinitely long and wide" (158). This lifelong process of purification unveils the sparkling stone we are as one in Christ. Ruusbroec stresses that one must first have become a contemplative—to have been transformed by a love having no ground (passed night of spirit)—to live a life of pure love.

Like the artist, the mystic seeks to share the experience. In meditation, one prays for all realizing that as part of the all, one is all. The romantic program evolved as an individual quest, and remained as such. The mystical journey, on the other hand, sees personal transformation as the concern for humankind's ultimate destiny. Therefore, Keating cautions, the meditator must take the journey seriously and with respect that it is least of all for himself that insights are granted:

> There's nothing worse than a half-baked mystic, because they think they know something and they *do*, and they *do* help other people. But then if it goes to their head and they start attributing it to themselves and their own powers instead of the Higher, then they begin to *dominate*. I think that's the key to a real enlightenment instead of a partial one. Real enlightened people are interested in service, not in dominating, whereas those who are self-interested in disciples are going to dominate eventually, a tendency which really destroys people emotionally.[18]

Jäger offers following words I use to close this chapter on the differences between romantic and mystic love:

> A person who has passed through all the stages of mystical development no longer distinguishes between sacred and secular, church and stable, cloister and world, prayer and work, action and passivity, suffering and joy. To such a person everything is holy, even refuse and filth. (The Way 50-1)[19]

One can not think to this level of reality, but living from this state of consciousness finds the maturity to not belittle, but put into perspective, Blake's awe-inspired insight that 'everything that lives is holy'. Thomas Keating sees the Ultimate Reality as Service, to become God is to serve, not out of our false self in hopes of reward and

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[18] Eastwest Foundation Interview: "Living Spirituality: An Interview with Father Thomas Keating." Winter 1989.

[19] Compare the previously cited statement by Novalis: "Relig[ions]Lehre. Sonderbar, daß in so viel Religionen die Götter Liebhaber des Häßlichen zu seyn scheinen" (3, 262).

recognition, but service from the freedom which comes from acting of the greater Self knowing no boundaries between self and other and therefore no possessions. Being present to the moment in its fullness means being able to respond to a situation, not reacting by filtering the situation through one's own emotional programs. Keating emphasizes that in order to help, one cannot become emotionally involved in melodramas but must be free to respond to the need as it is given. This depth of connection touches the root, not the swaying branches, of the call for help since true love is selfless love.

As the paradigm of human growth reveals, we are born selfish. The convoluted idealized 'reasoning' to presuppose that in our naïve and dependant outfit we are given at birth we are a unified whole undermines the whole corpus of mystical teaching not to mention scientific evolution. We must work to detach importance on the self if we wish to grow in love. Romantic love at a more evolved stage insinuates this through selfless actions; mystical love perfects selflessness itself. Up until the final purification, even our quest for spiritual holiness is initiated by the false self. Seeing the oneness of all is not indicative of a mystical realization; it can very possibly, and very probably for the German idealists, be but a nostalgic longing.

Meditation changes our perspective so that we once again can return to the state of unknowing most associated with becoming little children. The false-self system is not yet ingrained and separating us from our true selves. This is where Thomas Merton speaks of traveling not just to the self (i.e., know the self completely), but through it to gain your greater reality. Meister Eckhart accurately describes this

phenomenon with the term *durchdringen*. While difficult, it is insufficient to get to the self, one must work through it to then attain the fullness of life. Eternity, as we would do well to recall, is not everlasting, but rather without the concept of time.

Karl Rahner, esteemed as twentieth-century theologian and mystic, speaks for many when he considers that we must all become mystics or find the mystical element lacking in today's society for there to be any hope of global communion and peace. I find similar urging on part of the Romantics—except they longed to poetize the world, but for same outcome. Unfortunately, a community of self-centered individuals, no matter how whole and all-inclusive these centers may have grown, lacks the *common* quality to substantiate a true community.

CHAPTER 6
ROMANTIC REFLECTIONS

> Poetic experience is from the very start oriented toward expression, and terminates in a word uttered, or a work produced; while mystical experience tends toward silence, and terminates in an immanent fruitition of the absolute.
> (Maritain 235)

By means of philosophical speculation and idealistic thinking, Novalis sought to overcome division romantically, that is, in the full exploration of the senses and spirit by way of imagination. Novalis's journey remained in the romantic realm since he failed to come to know experientially the mystical truth that there is no division to begin with. Division occurs within the self; the self Novalis nourished was the very obstacle he needed to overcome. The initial union, typically identified as an experience of nature mysticism, is but a foretaste of true union; the larger Self is illuminated to the smaller self—a glimpse of which makes the small self, which becomes obsessed with this experience, hungry for more experiences. This in itself though, is but an invitation to the journey towards the Self.

Having portrayed Novalis as primarily a poet, who shares on the level of the artist, an affinity with mystical consciousness, calls attention to the ambiguity surrounding the term mysticism. Ken Wilber's presentation of the path as levels of consciousness helps identify where similarities end and differences of depth begin to emerge. Since language provides a focal point of departure in both the romantic and

mystic tradition to lead to something greater, incomplete understanding is likely to occur if subjective interpretation fuses romantic and mystic consciousness (though both arguably on a trans-personal) to the same level. The language itself gives little indication of the depth of experience. In one of his rewarding footnotes to Sex, Ecology, Spirituality Wilber uses plain language to argue those who would find enough support by saying, 'but the author says so':

> But the test is always: is this merely a metaphysical claim, or is it grounded in direct spiritual practice and direct, repeatable, reproducible experience? Anybody can say 'All is One.' The question is, what is the structure of consciousness that actually authors that statement? Magic? Mythic? Mental? Psychic? Subtle? Casual?—for all can and will claim ultimacy, and all can sound, on occasion, very 'nondual'. (643)

This dissertation, finally, is about the subject of language as a tool for pointing in the direction mystical experience leads since poetry is the language of the metaphor. As Joseph Campbell explains: A metaphor is an image that suggests something else...The reference of the metaphor in religious traditions is to something transcendent that is not literally any thing." (67). The bible itself is an extended metaphor, as is myth, allegory and other forms of symbolic representation. Campbell considers, for example, the biblical metaphor of heaven as did the chapter on home. That Jesus ascended into heaven is the beautiful metaphorical language of the bible, a mistaken, literal account of which, Campbell maintains, much of Christian dogma has been built. Heaven is union; Jesus returned to the center, the beginning, the inner and true Self. Mystics relate that the earth and its present reality *is* our paradise, yet we persist in imagining that we are separated.

Paradise is a gift to all. Our life's purpose to cultivate it in ourselves and others. We need not die to enter the kingdom, (since it is already given us) but truly live by accepting it. We enter the kingdom not by knowing our self, but by knowing the higher power within us. By example of paradise, the question arose to the difference where the kingdom, or infinite, is sought. Since the mystic does not distinguish between inside and outside, the infinite is simply the true center which at the same time is 'all'. For the romantics, the infinite lay within their innermost self, in which they dutifully found the All. Thomas Merton speaks for the mystic way in saying that the mystic passes through the center, through the self to enter God.

By the example of 'heaven', it can be argued that much communication is based on misunderstanding if we recognize that communication is not complete until the message is understood. Postmodern times find that one sign can signify numerous referents. Therefore the depths of metaphorical language is bound to be misunderstood if approached with individual preconceived notions and projections. To complete communication, we must supply the latent meaning or intention of the author. For the romantics, reading was an unending process of unceasing interpretation. As it was not necessary to come to a conclusion, importance was placed on free artistic reign of the imagination and senses to take part in the creative process. By this virtue, one becomes poet and author of one's own book of fragments.

Of course one of the beauties of timeless poetry is that it addresses the reader as an individual, precisely because of its openness our interpretation reveal more about ourselves than the poem. The metaphors of the great mystics of the Middle Ages

were grossly misunderstood by the established church, who promptly condemned their authors as heretics. The preface to Thomas Merton's New Seeds of Contemplation warns the reader to

> remember that in this book the author is talking about spiritual things from the point of view of experience rather than in the concise terms of dogmatic theology or of metaphysics. In religions, as in the natural life, the language of experience and the language of dogma or science may find themselves opposed. (7)

As the chapter on nature and the artist explored, there is a difference if one is in union with God and with all through him, or just in union with all. New Age spirituality taps into religion of pure experience, very much like Novalis' romantic religion which embraces all being faithful to none in search of sensation. Romanticism as the beginning of modern times establishes a relevance to presenting the journey of life fairly in its respective traditions. The mystic path presents us with the challenge of living visions of wholeness. The romantic spirit responded, but delayed the ending. The mystic concludes what for the romantic remains but a fragment of the journey.

Drawing on the strength of holarchical evolution to continue to evolve towards perfection, the statement by King, that "in fact, there exists a greater number and variety of mystics than ever before, no longer exclusively tied to the monastic and ascetic traditions of the past, although these also continue, but living in very different settings and contexts" (190) finds that mystical consciousness is a dynamic energy driving us home. Mystical union is more than the experience to which it is often reduced, but a restructuring of consciousness that allows us to act freely and

unselfishly. Moreover, each individual responds to the call to live full lives as they are able.

The romantic period, seen in light of the present presentation, offers a complementary asset to understanding the overall role of spirituality in today's world, and it is by no means restricted to a religious outlet in the search for wholeness. Yet, to wholly encounter the depths possible to the human, one must see the sense-filled awe displayed by the romantics as the stepping stone to an even deeper and truer level of reality. Society, for one, would greatly benefit heeding the incantations of great spiritual leaders who realize that only when centered and balanced can one experience perfect communion with the world. Political, social and economic freedom or attempts at promoting peace will continue to yield imperfect results; it is only when the spiritual component is set as mediating factor that peace is possible.

The romantics, after all, fictionalized their own world; unable to cope with reality of the adult world, the only world available to them was a revisit of the child's world, where imagination enjoyed free reign on the playing field. Inconceivable as it may sound, Habermas, Wilber and others suggest that romantics shunned the adult world to return to childhood where they could continue living in a manufactured world of their own ideals. I agree with Karl Barth, and others opine similarly, that Novalis appeals in his youthful innocence and delight as he floats from one activity to the next and conversely, his serious approach to dreams and magic. His magic ability to cast a transcendent spell registers harmony where there really is none but in his mind.

Mystical wisdom reveals—albeit through language—that the greatest, purest and most complete form of communication is silence. The one who knows cannot say, asserts the well-known Taoist dictum. Yet if the words are rooted to a practice of deep silence, they should guide the receptive ear back to the eternal source of inspiration. The metaphor of silence is often understood simply on the syntactic level of it being the absence of words. The spiritual journey is begun by reducing external and internal stimuli, i.e., language and thought processes, during periods of meditation. The mystic attains the perfect degree of knowledge of God through love. Pfefferkorn notes that since Novalis' language is spatial more than aural, his idea is that "primordial langague, for both the poet and the philosopher, is a language of imagery" (92). For God and the mystic, by comparison, the primordial language is silence. For Novalis, mystical denotes that which is secretive and unknown. When the poet speaks of the necessity to use a different language, it is to use not the common language of reason, nor silence, but rather the evocative language of poetry.

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Veronica Freeman attended high school at the Pinellas County School for the Arts with a concentration in music performance. She graduated from Eckerd College in 1992 with a BA in Psychology and German and began graduate studies in German at the University of Florida in the fall of 1992. Recent presentations have included papers on Hildegard von Bingen, atonal music in German film, and artists and mystics. She plans to remain in the teaching profession.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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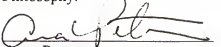

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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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